Liberty

JULY 17, 1943 10c

Book: GENTLE ANNIE
by MacKinlay Kantor

POSTWAR JOBS
FOR SERVICEMEN

this summer cool off with . . .

CORONET V.S.Q. BRANDY

. . . and soda

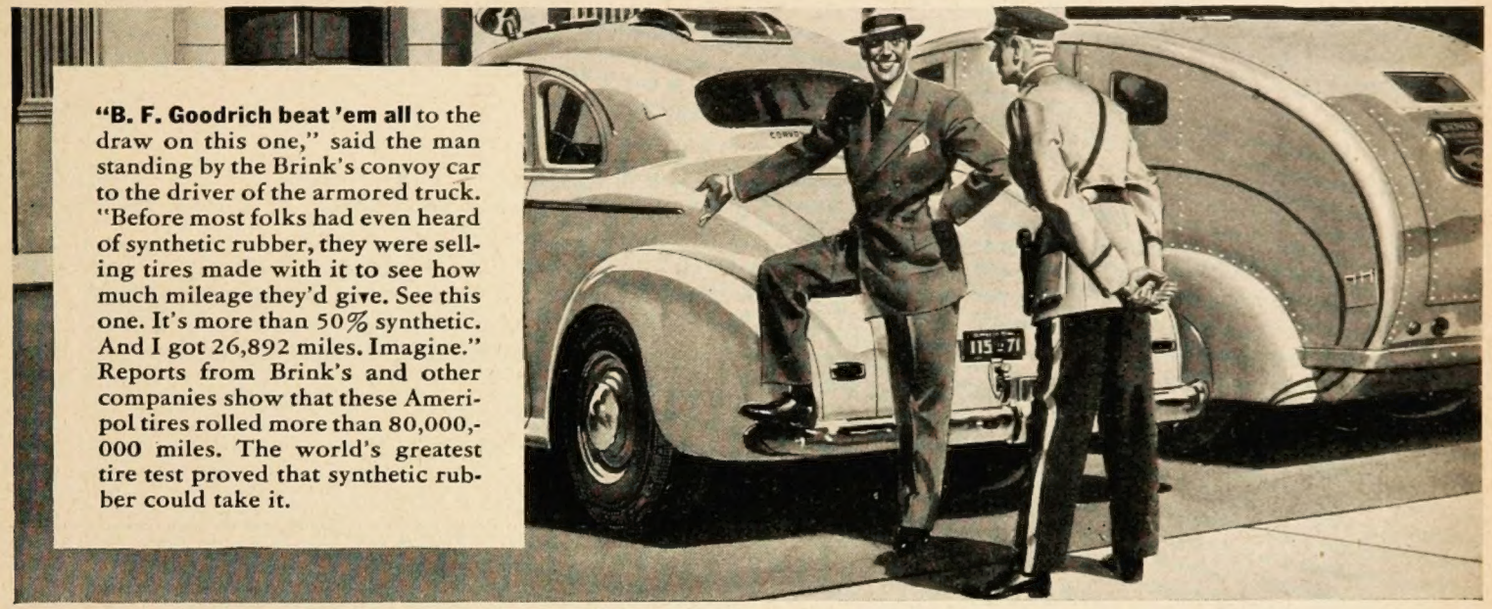
Ah! **Coronet Brandy** *and Soda on a summer's day! Cooling . . . refreshing . . . as you sip . . . and after.* **Coronet Brandy** *gives you everything you enjoy in a delicious tall drink . . . plus the rich aroma of a distinguished brandy. Try it . . . now!*

The torch of liberty, don't dim it. Buy U. S. War Bonds to your limit.

Tune in! Schenley's "Cresta Blanca Wine Carnival" every Wednesday evening, CBS.

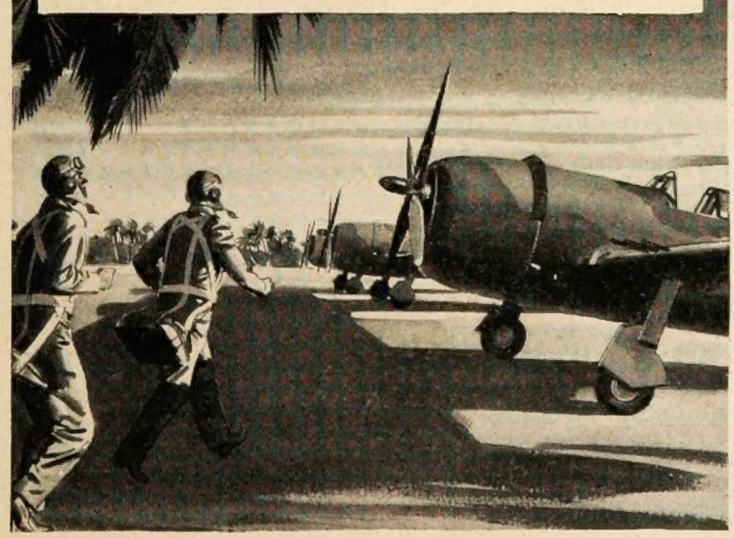
California grape brandy 84 proof. Schenley Distillers Corp., N. Y.

"YES, SIR! THESE SYNTHETIC TIRES TOOK PART IN AN 80,000,000 MILE ROAD TEST"



"B. F. Goodrich beat 'em all to the draw on this one," said the man standing by the Brink's convoy car to the driver of the armored truck. "Before most folks had even heard of synthetic rubber, they were selling tires made with it to see how much mileage they'd give. See this one. It's more than 50% synthetic. And I got 26,892 miles. Imagine." Reports from Brink's and other companies show that these Ameripol tires rolled more than 80,000,000 miles. The world's greatest tire test proved that synthetic rubber could take it.

On the world's fighting fronts synthetic rubber is battling for America. Jeep tires are made from it by B. F. Goodrich. So are airplane De-Icers, fuel tanks and fuel lines, just to name a few things. That's why everybody can't have synthetic rubber tires now.



Your War Bonds may buy a new car after the war. The car's design will be different, and its tires may be partially or wholly synthetic rubber. So please keep in mind the tire that's backed by an 80,000,000-mile road test —Silvertown, made by B. F. Goodrich, first in rubber.

LISTEN TO JOSEPH C. HARSCH
in "THE MEANING OF THE NEWS"
OVER THE COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM
EVERY NIGHT, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
Inside information by a man who has lived where the news is being made

In war or peace
B.F.Goodrich
FIRST IN RUBBER

CRESTA

the crest of quality since 1890

BLANCA

California red, white, and sweet...

WINES

You will delight in the "bottle-ripe" flavor of these wines. Since 1890 they have been hailed as the "crest of quality". Ask for them by name.

Tune in! Schenley's "Cresta Blanca Wine Carnival" every Wednesday evening, CBS.

Schenley PRODUCT

Cresta Blanca Wine Co. Inc. Livermore, Cal.

make your dollars fight, buy war bonds and stamps

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★ ARTICLES

Look Out for the Williwaws, *Edwin Muller* 13
Johnny Will March Home to a Job—*First of Three Articles*
Selective Service in Reverse, *David Brown* 15
How Long Before Victory? *Max Werner* 20
How's It Going, Yank? *Lieutenant Arthur Gordon* 33
A Million Kids Take Pen in Hand, *Martha Ostenso* 34
Who's Smarter—You or the Kids? *Lester F. Miles* 62

★ FICTION

Ozark Justice, *Eli Colter* 16
Gypsies Don't Forget—Liberty's Short Short, *Hartley E. Howe and Lieutenant Robert G. Pearson* 18
Wherever You Are, *Ware Torrey Budlong* 22
Stalk the Hunter—Part VII, *Mitchell Wilson* 36

★ BOOK

Gentle Annie—*A vivid novel by MacKinlay Kantor abridged to a reading time of one evening* 25

★ FEATURES

Vox Pop 6
Woman-Talk 8
Just Between Ourselves, *The Editors* 9
On the Beam, *Wayne Parrish* 10
Books in Review, *E. A. Piller* 48
Colonel Stoopnagle's Fictionary (*Unabashed*) 52
Crossword Puzzle 63
Liberty Goes to the Movies, *Harriet Gould* 64
This Man's War, *Old Sarge* 68

★ EDITORIAL

America's Future Is Up in the Air, *Paul Hunter* 70

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LEE WAGNER, CIRCULATION MANAGER

SYMBOL OF PROGRESS

Like radio, electric refrigerators and many other modern conveniences, the streamlined train has become an accepted part of our lives. It symbolizes the progressive spirit of American industry—of individual enterprise.

Union Pacific developed the first streamlined train *during the depression era;* an outstanding example of far-sighted engineering and executive genius. It is largely due to this same spirit of progress that miracles in war production have been achieved by our country's industrial plants; it is the spirit that has spurred our railroads to accomplish seemingly super-human tasks in the transportation of war materials and troops.

It is this spirit of progress, this truly American characteristic, that will eliminate the Axis. Union Pacific, for its part, will continue to "keep 'em rolling."

The Progressive

UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD

ROAD OF THE STREAMLINERS AND THE CHALLENGERS

The new Breezewood Pipe

$1.00

From the Great Smoky Mountains a new pipe —light in weight!

Again America has given Americans a new treasure! A virgin forest, deep in North Carolina, now sends out pipes astonishingly light in weight, remarkably sweet-smoking! Ask your dealer to let you weigh a Breezewood pipe in your hand—then buy one, and discover America's big success story in pipe-smoking pleasure! Ask for the pipe from the Great Smokies—Breezewood!

No wonder they were astonished! They all guessed too high! Actually the astounding new Breezewood pipe weighs, on an average, less than 1¼ ounces.

Free your Hands for Other Tasks

The new Breezewood pipe is so light, it's pleasant to keep it in your mouth. Breezewood doesn't fatigue you when working, driving, or whenever your hands are busy.

Copy. 1943. The Breezewood Pipe Co., 630 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

★ VOX POP ★

"The Voice of the People"

MUST HAVE BEEN THAT GREEN PRINTER

WELLESLEY, MASS.—

The ax I would grind to bring to your mind
Is about the green background now used by Ted Shane.
The use of faint greens—which can barely be seen—
Seems stupid to us whose eyes are "have-beens."
We mostly grow older—need figures much bolder,
And failing in sight, like good black and white.

—*Elizabeth P. Sanderson.*

While we're about it, we might apologize to Shane fans for the super-cockeyed quality of that green-tinted puzzle in the June 5 issue—a printing error blocked out two squares that should have been left open.

MAIL FLOWN 150 YEARS AGO

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—I thought your readers might be interested in the little

known fact that Benjamin Franklin was the first person ever to receive an air-mail letter. The development of postal air service began more than 150 years ago, when John Jeffries carried from England to France the first air-mail letter and delivered it to Benjamin Franklin.

Jeffries made the first flight across the English Channel with Francois Blanchard. They traveled by balloon. —*William M. Vermilye.*

In May 15 Vox Pop a reader claimed the first air mail was flown in and out of Paris during its siege by the Germans in the 1870s. But Benjamin Franklin's letter antedates this by nearly a century.

WE'RE ALL IN IT

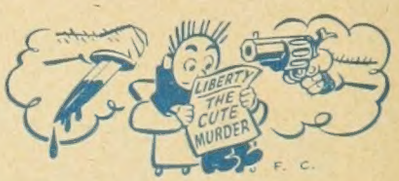
WILMINGTON, N. C.—In They Fight by Sharing (an article on wartime Britain in May 15 Liberty) Donald Wilhelm says "they" are lucky to have timepieces repaired in a month! Upon visiting a jeweler to have my watch put in shape, I was told, "We are taking no more watches to repair; have more than we can finish in two months." Bananas, candy, and beef are only a memory here. America is feeling the pinch too, especially in places overcrowded like this one.—*M. N. H.*

MURDER BY REQUEST

HARTFORD, CONN.—I don't wish to appear unpatriotic and I do appreciate a good war story, but there is a limit to all good things.

Please, we readers like to read stories about other subjects as well. Would it be asking *too much* to ask for a few prewar stories?

I, for one, would appreciate a good



hunting or fishing story. Or even a good murder.—*F. W. L.*

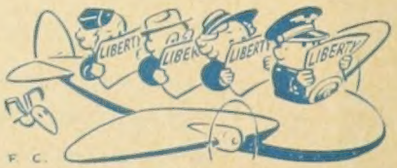
Unfortunately, there's a lot of war in the world at present, but we try not to overdo it. For instance, The Wedding Pageant at Cloud Center, by James Francis Dwyer, and A World-Wide Language, Basic English, by Gretta Palmer, both in the June 19 Liberty, and Richy Walks Alone, by Georgia Maxwell Robertson, in the June 12 issue, had nothing to do with war, and Ozark Justice, in this issue, has hunting *and* murder.

ISABEL, TAKE A BOW

PASSAIC, N. J.—I want to congratulate Isabel Moore for her swell story, It's Time to Say Good-by. My sister and I have just finished reading its conclusion in June 5 Liberty. I've never read anything more emotional since My Friend Flicka.—*Thomas Zingarelli.*

WE'RE UP IN THE AIR OVER THIS

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Congratulations on your new streamlined magazine. It tops everything on the market today. I am a flight steward for Eastern Air Lines,



and I noticed so many people reading it, I decided to see what it was all about, and found out why every one seems to carry Liberty along on the trip. Your selections of stories and articles are amazing. The complete novel itself is worth the price many times over.—*Joseph P. Kearney.*

POSTWAR LEGS

BELMAR, N. J.—New Warps and Strange Woofs (July 3 Liberty) makes

interesting reading and it undoubtedly will take a weight off many people's minds to know that women will not go unclad for the duration—or will it?

But, in heaven's name, why carry ersatz materials over into postwar living? Catch any woman *preferring* rayon to pure silk, once the wartime restrictions are lifted! Or any one wearing a "wooden" suit when she can get a woolen one! Nylon stockings, which both look and wear better than silk or rayon, are something else again. But the other materials mentioned in Mr. Markey's article are simply substitutes that all of us will be more than happy to throw overboard for the real thing. —*Sally, Irene, and Mary.*

C'EST LA GUERRE

CLEVELAND, OHIO—Was very much disappointed to see that the famous paintings of our generals, admirals, etc., by McClelland Barclay, have been discontinued. I had started a scrapbook with these paintings, and expected to finish the book with the beautiful paintings and information on each one.—*Irene Magalski.*

Lieutenant Commander McClelland Barclay, U. S. N. R., is at present on active duty. When he will return to the United States, or have time from his naval duties to resume painting, is not known. We hope to resume publication of those paintings, but can set no definite date.—ART DIRECTOR, LIBERTY.

HE WAS IN THE INFANT-RY

FULTON, KY.—In reading Matinee Price (June 5 Liberty) I marveled at Old Nate's strength and endurance in

that long, hot, hurried walk to see Gone with the Wind. The Civil War was fought from 1861 to 1865, and since Nate fought in that, it would make him well in his nineties, even if he went in young.—*Bess Morris.*

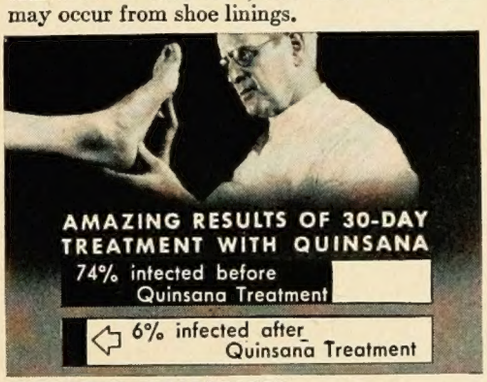
PENNIES PLUS HEAVEN

MACON, GA.—We boys at Camp Wheeler would very much appreciate your putting something in Liberty about Mrs. R. A. Godfrey of this city. She sure has done a lot to make us boys feel happy. Every day, as she walks along, she stops every soldier she meets and gives him a dime wrapped in a little piece of paper. On the paper she has written: "I am praying for you to be safe. Wherever they send you, keep this as a reminder to pray."

She has given out over four thousand of these, and it sure makes us feel good to think some one is praying for our safety. So please mention it.—*Pvt. Ed Bleakley.*

SCIENCE KEEPS AMERICA MARCHING— FIGHTS ATHLETE'S FOOT 2 WAYS

SCIENCE is aiding U.S. war effort with new successes over Athlete's Foot. The disease is a real threat, as it infects over 70% of adults some time during the year. Everyone should fight the infection to help avoid serious foot troubles that may cause inefficiency and absenteeism. Today a new fungicidal powder—*Quinsana*—is proving amazingly effective in combating Athlete's Foot. Quinsana action is based on scientific knowledge that the fungi which cause the disease cannot live under certain *alkaline* conditions; and that re-infection may occur from shoe linings.


AMAZING RESULTS OF 30-DAY TREATMENT WITH QUINSANA
74% infected before Quinsana Treatment
6% infected after Quinsana Treatment

INFECTION DISAPPEARED in practically all cases among thousands of persons using Quinsana (see chart above). Watch for usual symptoms of Athlete's Foot . . . chronic peeling between toes, cracks, soggy skin, itching. Even mild cases may suddenly become serious. Inflammation may mean *germ* infection; see physician or chiropodist. (Diabetics should be doubly sure to use Quinsana regularly).

BLOW TORCH could destroy hard-to-kill Athlete's Foot fungi which may thrive in shoes and re-infect feet. You can't use a blow torch, but you *can* use Quinsana in shoes (absorbs moisture, reducing chances of re-infection). Use Quinsana also on feet. It is fungicidal, bactericidal, non-irritating, absorbent.

USE 2-WAY TREATMENT with Quinsana daily, to help *prevent* as well as relieve Athlete's Foot. It's as easy to use as talcum powder. Also excellent for excessive perspiration, foot odor. *Pharmaceutical Division, The Mennen Company, Newark, N. J., San Francisco.*

WOMAN-TALK

by MARGARET FISHBACK

MIND OVER MATTER: Beautiful Marjorie Goodenow, wife of the artist "Gig," has a problem garden in the so-called heart of New York. City soot plus lack of soil defied all her dogged efforts to make food or flowers flourish. Ingenious as well as determined, she solved her difficulties and acquired a modicum of landscaping by using artificial flowers whose wire stems she stuffs belligerently into the anemic rock-

bound dirt. Her only complaint now is that showers occasionally come up when she isn't home to haul her crops in where it's dry.

THE RABBIT SITUATION: Time and rabbits wait for no bureaucrat. An indignant resident of Mountain Lakes, New Jersey, wrote early in the spring for state permission to slay a rabbit invading his Victory garden. By the time he got an official green light, the rabbit had become the proud ancestor of 164 other rabbits, and the despondent gardener needed permission to use a machine gun. What he should do is give up the garden and raise rabbits instead. Rumor has it that the government plans a nation-wide campaign to foster back-yard hutches, thereby augmenting meat and chicken supplies. Rabbit meat has as much nutritional value as chicken, and there's more meat on Peter's bones. . . . Ted Steele, the radio boy, is a rabbit fancier of no mean ability. It all started with a pair of Easter rabbits. Now he owns 500 breeding rabbits, and supplies the New York store that recently opened a barnyard at Thirty-fourth and Broadway, in which thousands of chickens have been sold to thousands of neophyte chicken farmers, who will now have to find room for rabbit hutches as well.

GOOFY BUT GAY: Lieutenant Hugh Troy, six-foot-five prize winner of the New York Herald Tribune's 1943 Children's Book Festival, is the same sprightly giant who in his civilian days once bought a garden bench and, with a confederate, carried it via taxi to Central Park. There they disembarked and started lugging it about. In the wink of a gnat's eyelash they were apprehended by the law, taken to the police station, where they gleefully established ownership by producing the bill of sale. Equipped with that sort of fey mind, it's no surprise to us that Troy's prize book, Five Golden Wrens, should be the story of a king who was sorely troubled by world news which came to him interminably by way of a radio attachment in his golden crown. The five wrens, mistaking it for a birdhouse, settled in it, and sang so mellifluously that the king believed he had tuned in on a secret station. It took his mind off his troubles, and will do the same for mothers reading it to their young.

STOP STRETCHING A POINT: Lines on an Epicure who does not relish the recent welter of meat-stretching recipes. He says put the Women's Page editors in the icebox and give him eggs *or* meat *or* cereal, but don't confuse the issue by adding corn meal or soybeans or saw-

dust to that occasional pound of good old hamburger.

The way my lord and master feels
Is this: he'd simply rather not
Have *any* meat for several meals,
But when he has it, have a lot.

MIXING BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE: Beardsley Ruml, the only economist and ex-professor in the country who is also a genuine wag, was asked how he'd managed to get so much personal publicity out of his tax plan. Why was it so constantly referred to as the "Ruml" plan? Why not the "pay-as-you-earn" plan? Ruml's answer was that he had *not* sought the publicity, but that the press maintained they liked to use the word "Ruml" because there were so few four-letter words that *could* appear in the public prints. . . . Incidentally, Mr. Ruml, who is a vast spherical bon vivant, affects corduroy dinner clothes of the most astonishing hues—canary jacket, rust trousers, and various other rainbow contrasts and combinations.

NEXT WEEK

THE ENIGMA OF THE '44 ELECTIONS

According to George Gallup, of public opinion fame, prewar patterns of voting behavior will be discarded by the new elements that will prevail. In the first place, approximately eleven million men of voting age will be away to the wars if present plans materialize. Women and older men will have the opportunity to pick the next President in lieu of the absentee fighters. But, despite the missing faces, their voices will be heard. And what will the voices say? Republicans are already impaled on one horn of the dilemma. Who can predict the Democrats' stand on important issues? Both parties are groping for the right answers. Next week Liberty will present Mr. Gallup's analysis of the trends. Don't miss it.

LATEST MEDICAL MIRACLE: PENICILLIN

Remember the Boston night-club holocaust? The public's recollection of that dreadful fire which took a toll of almost 500 lives concerns only the terror and human torture left in its wake. But medical men mark that fire as the event that allowed, for the first time, a large-scale experiment of the new miracle drug. And behind that successful experiment is a dramatic story of the development of penicillin. We'll give you that story next week.

MUSIC IS BIG BUSINESS

Back in the days when flappers flapped and raccoons died in droves to provide coats for well dressed collegians, a band rode to fame on the top-notch jazz of the times. Today, according to Crossley, that barometer of radio popularity, the same band is still riding high, wide, and handsome. What's the explanation of this twenty years of success in the fickle worlds of Broadway and radio? You'll find out next week when you read the amazing story of Fred Waring —the man who put the Pennsylvanians where they are, and kept them there. You'll also learn how the band leader got mixed up with the mixer which has made his name a byword among frozen daiquiri fans.

BOOK CONDENSATION

William Saroyan's The Human Comedy, a story of lovable people who will steal into your heart and stay there.

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

VON BEHR, PHOTO.

"YOU'D KNOW SHE
was smart just to look at her," said one of our Liberty boys, and he didn't know that Ware Torrey Budlong, whose picture we present, had taken both degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Literature at Barnard College and the Columbia School of Journalism respectively. Her story in this issue, Wherever You Are, is the latest of many she has had published here and in England. Also, under the name Lee Crosby, she is the author of a series of mystery novels. And New York is her bailiwick.

WHEN YOU READ
Look Out for the Williwaws, by Edwin Muller, it won't surprise you to know that he spent last winter in Alaska, and saw Kodiak, Yukon, and other Farthest North spots at their iciest. Though he speaks eloquently of airplanes and their marvelous mastery of time and space, he prefers to have his feet on the ground.

UPPERMOST IN OUR MIND
and yours is the question which Max Werner propounds, How Long Before Victory? No one is better qualified than he to give a fair and well considered answer to this difficult question, for he has achieved the reputation of being the one military expert writing in the democracies today whose predictions have come true so far. Mr. Werner has devoted his entire life to military analysis, and is the author of The Military Strength of the Powers, Battle for the World, The Great Offensive, and Attack Can Win in '43.

THE EDITORS.

You'll never forget its delicious

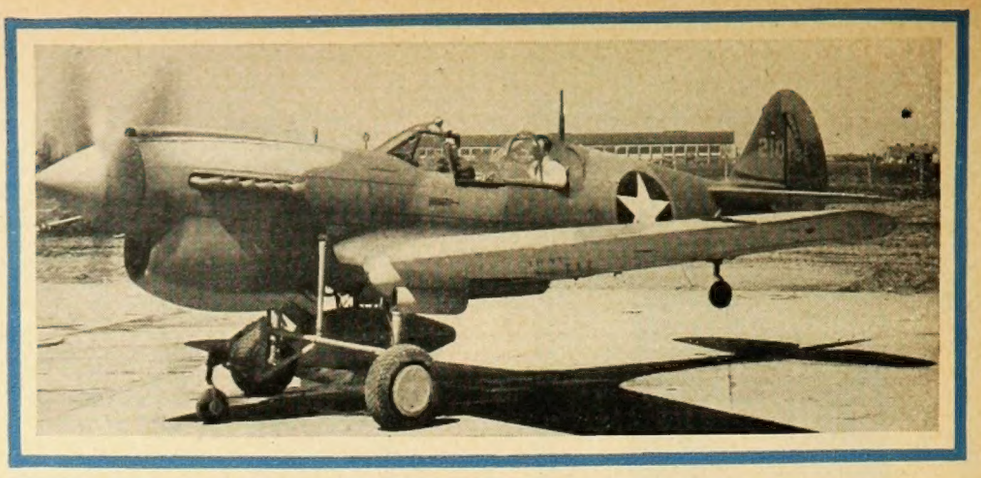
GOOD TASTE

ONCE you've enjoyed your first tall glass of Blatz, you won't ever forget its delicate full flavor . . . and you'll never be quite satisfied with other beers. That explains why people with a taste for fine beer are so loyal to Blatz Pilsener. It's simply GOOD TASTE.

BLATZ BREWING CO., MILWAUKEE, WIS.
In Our 92nd Year

Buy War Bonds

Blatz
MILWAUKEE



Built from salvaged Curtiss P-40 parts, this "taxi trainer" was developed to teach Army ground-crew men how to handle speedy fighters. However, Susie Q does not fly.

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Postwar Previews

If you want to know what one expert thinks postwar air lines will be like, here are the views of W. W. Davies, research engineer of United Air Lines. Mr. Davies visualizes four major types of airplanes for commercial operations:

1. A four-engined 63½-ton, 100-passenger transport with a cruising speed of 266 miles an hour and a range of 2,500 miles, suitable for one-stop transcontinental service with a total time of eleven hours from New York to San Francisco. (That's less than half a day, coast to coast!)

2. A four-engined, 40-ton, moderate-range passenger type of airplane for "club" service. It will be de luxe, similar to a railroad club car, possibly with surcharge on the fare and plenty of extra services.

3. A twin-engined 21-ton combination passenger-and-cargo plane, not unlike the standard transports of today, with capacity for passengers averaging from fifteen to twenty-one seats.

4. A twin-engined 16-ton "flying freight car" for cargo only. Such a plane would remove heavy mail loads from passenger planes, which now carry everything from people to mail and express.

Mr. Davies also thinks that the largest airports will have runways of between 8,000 and 10,000 feet—almost two miles long. He forecasts as many as 6,000 scheduled coast-to-coast flights a month over a typical transcontinental route.

Free Hand for Airmen

Although it couldn't be printed at the time, the U. S. 8th Air Force had almost no heavy bombers until recently. At one time there were large numbers of U. S. planes in England, but these were quietly and quickly shifted to North Africa in one of the greatest air movements of history. Meantime a handful of bombers were left in England for experimental flights and training—just enough to let the Nazis know that U. S. airmen were in evidence.

This summer will see the first real concentrated effort of air power to destroy the enemy behind the lines—the first real such attempt in history. The British will continue bombing at night, the Americans by day. Virtually all early skepticism about the possibilities of U. S. bombing by daylight has disappeared—the evidence of U. S. precision bombing has been proven to be extremely effective. Hundreds upon hundreds of four-engined heavy bombers of both nations—combining to make the greatest air armada in history—will shuttle back and forth on missions of destruction. Airmen believe that by wintertime Germany's transportation, utilities, and industry will be fatally crippled.

Happy Medium

While rumors flit about like summer flies that the United States is headed for government control of our international air lines, a group of government experts is quietly formulating a sane and sensible plan for this country's postwar air policy. Subject to being upset by higher powers, this group, representing the Army, Navy, Department of Commerce, Civil Aeronautics Board, State Department, and Board of Economic Warfare, is laying out a program which eliminates all prospects of government ownership, or of monopoly by one air line.

Most aviation authorities believe postwar air transportation is too big for any single air line, and believe there should be a pattern of competition for the world, with government regulation, similar to the competition among air lines within the United States. This means that air lines of foreign nations will be permitted to fly to the United States, and in exchange our own air lines will be able to fly to foreign countries.

With the Army Air Forces reaching toward a 2,000,000-man strength, we will have a great many trained men available for air-line operations after the war. The interdepartmental committee wants this large group of airmen to have a part in world air commerce. They see free enterprise as the only real answer.

Fighter Protection

For twenty years fighter planes have been built for high climbing, fast maneuvering, interception—or for accompanying bombers part way on the latters' mission. Because they had to be maneuverable and light, they have never had much range. If the flying range was increased, fire power had to be decreased.

That has meant that heavy bombers must go on long-range missions alone, depending upon their own fire power for protection. Enemy interception tends to disrupt the effective discharge of the bombers' mission, so long-range fighters have come into fashion. This means that heavy bombers have better protection and can sacrifice fire power for greater bomb loads. And with protection they can take more time to size up their targets.

Vision Formula

"How far can I see from the air?"

The captains of the Pan American Airways System have worked out a "vision range" formula after answering for years, from their own knowledge, the multitudinous queries of Pan American passengers:

The range of vision from the air equals the square root of your altitude multiplied always by 1.225 miles. For example, at 10,000 feet it is possible to see 122.5 miles, since the square root of 10,000, which is 100, multiplied by 1.225 equals 122.5.

From	1,000	feet	you	can	see	39 miles
"	2,000	"	"	"	" 55	"
"	3,000	"	"	"	" 62	"
"	4,000	"	"	"	" 77	"
"	5,000	"	"	"	" 82	"
"	10,000	"	"	"	"123	"
"	15,000	"	"	"	"150	"
"	20,000	"	"	"	"173	"
"	25,000	"	"	"	"194	"

Odds and Ends

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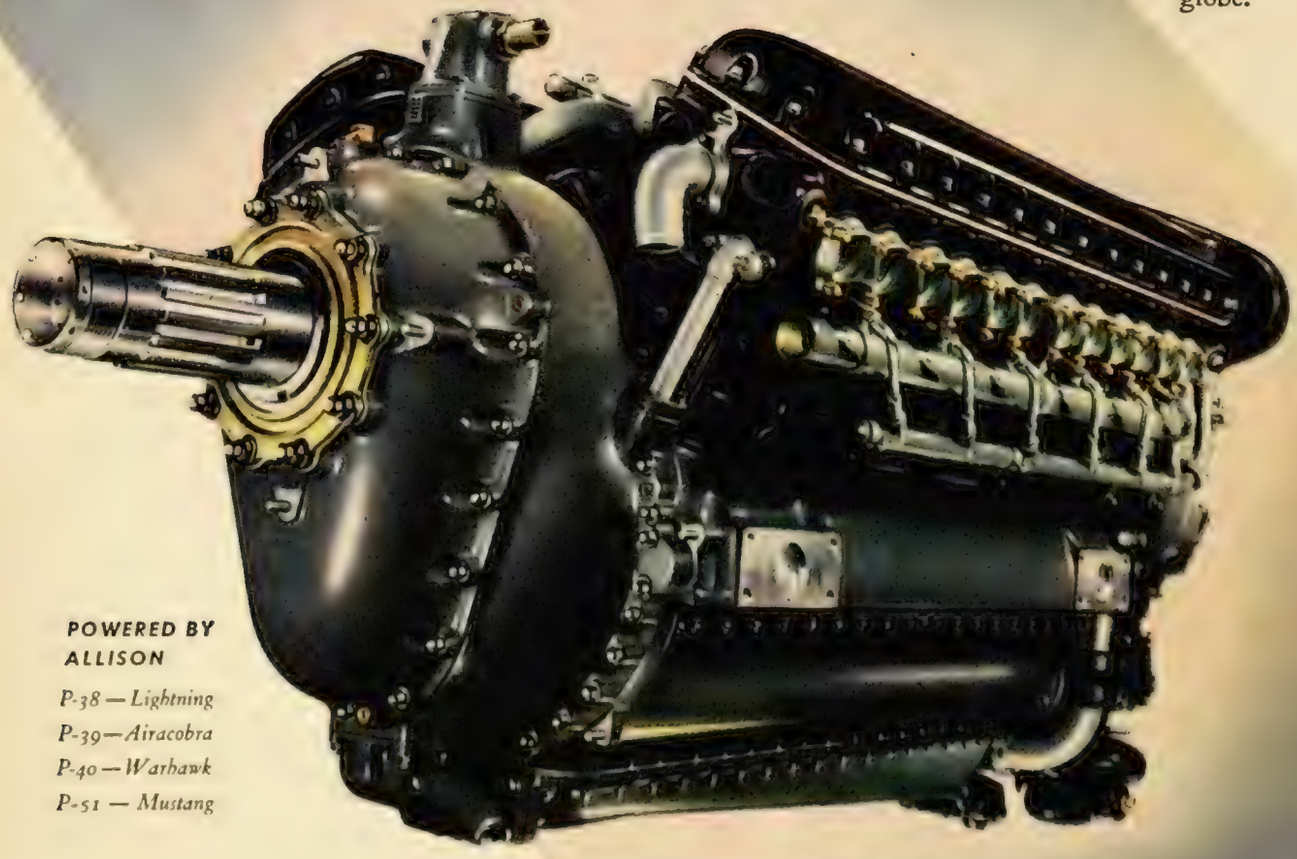

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THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

LOOK OUT FOR THE WILLIWAWS

In the Aleutians our toughest foe is weather —not the Japs. A hair-raising account of flying and sailing in a land still under creation

The torpedo passed between the two ships. It exploded without doing much damage.

BY EDWIN MULLER

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

THERE were nine fighter planes in the formation. An eighty-mile wind was on their tails and they were doing a mile every twelve seconds.

Ten thousand feet below them the wild and rugged expanse of the Alaska Peninsula flowed past. The gale was whirling great plumes of snow off the summits of the peaks. Just ahead, rising about 5,000 feet, was the last range, the one that bordered the shores of Shelikof Strait. That was the objective.

The pilots weren't conscious of any danger. This was only a practice flight. But there was no way they could know that on the far side of that last range, at that moment, a "williwaw" was being born.

The violent and destructive life of a williwaw lasts about ten minutes. An eighty-mile gale was flowing straight across the range's crest. Below, on the lee side, was a dead calm —until suddenly the mighty forces of the wind, piling up on the windward side of the peaks, broke over the crest and poured down. The result was like what happens when a smooth swift stream flows over a boulder close to the surface. The water breaks up into a leaping turbulence of foam and whirlpools. That's how it was here—on a vast scale. In a moment the calm broke up in an indescribable tumult of savage blasts—up currents, down currents, rushing whirlpools of wind. Meteorologists have never been able to measure those gusts, but it is known that they reach a velocity double that of the constant wind above.

The planes came on.

Major Carl Garver, who told me the story, was piloting the last one. He saw the leader, following the instructions for the flight, peel off and start a long dive toward the far side of the range. One by one the others followed him. Their speed rose to 350 miles an hour.

Garver was some distance behind and above the rest of the formation. He could see plainly what happened to the others when their dive brought them down past the crest.

"It was like a sudden gust of wind striking a little pile of leaves," he says. "The planes were dashed every which way, thrown straight up or down hundreds of feet, whirled over and over." Below them he had just a glimpse of the black water of the strait leaping up in huge waves, great bursts of spray.

Then he too was caught.

There wasn't the faintest chance of his keeping command of the plane. He let go the controls to relieve the strain on them, tried desperately to

brace himself in the cockpit. But he was wrenched loose, his body banged and bruised, his head struck against the top. It was as if the plane were being shaken by a giant dog. He could hear the wind even above the roar of the motor.

Then, with a harder impact, his head smashed against the top and he went "out."

He thinks it was the spray through the windshield that revived him. At any rate, he was within fifty feet of the water when, half-conscious, he got hold of the controls and somehow brought the plane into calmer air.

The survivors limped home to Elmendorf Field. The amazing thing is that only one was missing—Garver's roommate and best friend. His body and his plane are still at the bottom of Shelikof Strait.

THE williwaw is only one of the characteristic features that make the weather of the Alaska south coast and the Aleutians "the worst in the world."

In that combat area the Army and Navy are fighting a war, first with the weather, second with the Japs. Of the two foes, the weather has destroyed the more planes, sunk the more ships, and killed the more men.

Of course the Japs have to fight the weather too. But often, up there, it's fighting on their side.

In that part of the globe the earth is still in the throes of creation. It is being made visibly before your eyes, as it might have been millions of years ago. The mountains are still lifting themselves up out of the sea. There are earthquakes and volcanoes; the ground mutters underfoot. It's a land of high winds and dense fogs, of mingled ice and fire.

A supply line from Anchorage to Attu would be about 2,000 miles long, and one must fight the weather along every mile of it.

Suppose you flew the length of it —and, by extraordinary luck, had fair weather all the way. Here's what you would see:

First a coast of dark gloomy headlands jutting out into the sea, of deep fjords reaching back into the land. Behind are the great snow peaks, like a file of giants marching westward. You pass the craggy island of Kodiak, whose bears are the largest carnivorous animals on earth. Farther west, down the peninsula, the land grows bleaker. There are no more trees, only the barren mountainsides. There are many volcanoes. Shishaldin, old "Smoking Moses," humps up 11,000 feet, slowly puffing great smoke rings into the air.

Now the file of giants begins to march down into the sea. The range of mountains becomes a chain of islands, which are still mountains with only the jagged tops above the surface.

The chain goes on and on, the ocean boiling through the passes between the islands. You see the buildings and installation of Dutch Harbor, clustered on a bay set among the bare peaks. Farther out, in the Andreanofs, you can, if you look very close, spot where our soldiers have dug themselves into the stony soil. Sometimes you see a transport or a destroyer wallowing in the heavy seas below.

So at last you come to Kiska, and there—at this writing—you'd better turn back.

OUT there, along the chain of the Aleutians, is where much of the weather of our continent is made. It is the birthplace of the storms—of wind and fog, snow and sleet and rain.

The reason is that there the warm Japan current meets the ice-cold waters of the Bering Sea. In such a meeting place the weather is always bad, as it is off the Grand Banks, where the Gulf Stream comes together with the Arctic waters. But here it is worse, because the meeting takes place in this inferno of rugged islands. The winds and the ocean currents, funneling through the narrow gaps and channels, are built up and intensified.

The weather is fighting us on land, on the sea, and in the air.

The planes probably get it worst. It isn't the wind velocity that matters so much to a well built bomber or fighter. It's the shiftiness of the winds, the sudden violent gusts—the williwaw sort.

Everywhere that flyers get together you hear williwaw stories. How a heavy bomber, anchored on a field with everything its crew could get hold of, was picked up, stood on its nose, then turned over on its back. How another was yanked right out of its revetment, the shallow cave built for its protection. How a Fortress on the way to Kiska was so buffeted that all its bombs were shaken loose and thrown out.

A PBY with a torpedo on board was taking off from the water in Kodiak harbor. A williwaw snatched it, turned it over, threw the torpedo out. Near by, two ships were anchored not far apart. One was loaded with high-octane gas, the other with TNT. The explosion of either would have wrecked the whole naval base. The torpedo got in motion, started straight toward the ships. To the watchers it seemed to take hours on its way.

It passed between the ships, went on, finally exploded without killing anybody or doing much damage.

The worst williwaws have never been described. The planes which have met them haven't come back.

Another typical Alaska wind is the taku. Its specialty is a sudden reversal of direction. In Juneau a fifty-mile taku picked up an empty crate from in front of a store, moved it a block down the street. Five minutes later the same wind took the crate and put it back exactly where it had come from.

While it lasts—which may be for days—a taku makes it almost impossible to land or take off planes.

Fog is perhaps a worse enemy than wind. It's bad enough in a flat country, where there are plenty of landing fields to choose from, radio beams to guide the plane in. Here in southern Alaska a flat stretch is a rarity, there are few alternative fields, and beams can't be used so near the enemy.

WHEN the bombers go out to hammer Kiska they worry more about fog than about Japanese ack-ack—though the latter is effective. A formation takes off from the Andreanofs on a clear day. Two or three hours later they are back with the bomb racks empty and a few bullet holes in the fuselages. As likely as not, the field has closed down to zero. They circle and circle up in the muck, hoping to find a hole. They have to come down at last—often are lucky to make crash landings on the sea, where they can take to the rubber boats.

(*Continued on page 59*)

Somebody woke up—and yelled. The ocean wasn't even in sight.

WILL JOHNNY MARCH HOME TO A JOB?

First of Three Articles

SELECTIVE SERVICE IN REVERSE

What's in store for America's fighting men after Victory? Will they find work? What about a bonus? The first of a series of articles telling how government and industry are planning postwar employment of veterans

BY DAVID BROWN

The draft board now putting Johnny into the Army will put him in a job when the war ends.

YOUR typical American fighting man is already wondering what will happen to him after this war. Vice-President Wallace's speeches and the Four Freedoms are not quite specific enough to reassure him. He knows that many veterans of the last war were promised their old jobs back, or better ones, and got neither. Will his old job be waiting for him? At the same wages or salary? Or will *any* job be waiting for him?

Many of his questions can now be answered. And the answers are as cheering as a United Nations victory. In fact, they herald a kind of victory—one of farsightedness on the home front. A study of postwar plans and legislation makes it clear that our veterans will return to a far more appreciative America than did their fathers in 1919.

Our government has set up a vast postwar program—already backed by many laws and having the support of private industry—in anticipation of the time when Johnny comes marching home. It provides that every honorably discharged veteran get his old job back or one as good; that handicapped and disabled veterans be trained at government expense for jobs they are able to do; and that some kind of severance pay be granted servicemen to ease their way back to civil life. Government aid for men whose educations have been interrupted by military service is also in the postwar cards.

On D Day—the day demobilization is ordered—the whole ponderous machinery of the draft will shift into reverse. Millions of men will be withdrawn from military service as systematically as they were once taken from civil life. Selective Service plans call for "demobilization in terms of potential employment in certain locations and at certain times." Instead of meeting Army and Navy quotas, local draft boards after V Day will meet job quotas determined by the man-power needs of private industry and public works programs. The armed forces will be demobilized, so far as is possible, no faster than our economy can re-absorb the men—leaving for a time, of course, a considerable number, possibly volunteers, to man the nation's peacetime defenses.

Our demobilized veterans will find that their re-employment rights are firmly set in a law which was passed more than a year before we were at war—the Selective Service Act of 1940. Section 8 requires private employers to re-hire honorably discharged veterans who left their jobs to enlist or were drafted. The only conditions are that the man be still qualified to do the job, that he make application for it within forty days of leaving the service, and that it be not "impossible or unreasonable" for the employer to take him back. Indications are that the government will be quick to contest any attempt to take advantage of the law's "ifs and buts." Moreover, the law states that ex-servicemen cannot be fired without cause from private jobs for a year following their re-employment.

The government is equally zealous in protecting its own former permanent employees now with the armed forces. Under the law, they too must be restored to their old jobs or to jobs of "like seniority, status and pay." Veterans will have preference in federal civil service employment. Their examination scores will automatically be boosted five points. Age limitations and many of the physical requirements for federal jobs will be waived in their cases. And the law provides that they be the last to be fired when retrenchment is ordered.

By some legalistic quirk, former state and municipal employees don't enjoy the same legal protection as former federal employees. Congress couldn't cover state and municipal workers without technically usurping states' rights, which, of course, would render the whole law unconstitutional. But the Selective Service Act of 1940 does state that it is "the sense of Congress" that veterans formerly employed by states and municipalities get their jobs back. And judging from the benefits which some state legislatures are preparing to enact for returning servicemen, former state and city employees will probably have ample protection.

Even the most ambitious veteran re-employment program would fail if postwar industry had no jobs to offer. The primary responsibility for supplying postwar jobs therefore rests with private industry—not government. The government realizes that legislation alone won't create those private jobs. That is why for the past two years officials of Selective Service's Re-employment Division—the actual co-ordinating and liaison agency of the whole veteran re-employment program—have been conferring with business, labor, and agricultural leaders, quietly mapping out measures which will assure a quick economic turnabout from war

(*Continued on page 39*)

OZARK JUSTICE

A brooding tale of love and murder in the Ozarks where vengeance is sometimes slow but always sure

BY ELI COLTER

ILLUSTRATED BY AL SCHMIDT

WE had a long summer that year, and the deep Ozark hills stretched wet and green and glistening, with the mist hanging to the glades and hollows lying in long gossamer ribbons along Prairie Creek bottom. The morning was calm and still, like the Twenty-third Psalm read on a quiet Sunday afternoon.

As I walked toward the courthouse I heard a bobwhite's call over in the blackberry thicket behind Mason's barnyard, and from somewhere farther off I heard cowbells' cheery tympana. Down along the bluff overlooking the creek a group of small boys were laughing and shouting in shrill confusion, and looking across sentinel rows of shocked corn I could see their cane fishing poles jiggling in the air as they made their way to the water, bent on snagging a Saturday goggle-eye or bullhead.

I remember every sound, every scene in view that morning, as though it were all part and parcel of some Olympian jest, mocking us and taunting us, and softening our sensitivities for the shock. For that was the morning Webb and Charlie Murdock brought their young brother Jay to town in the bed of the spring wagon, his head split open with an ax and his overalls clotted with his life's blood, his clothes still wet from the night dew.

I was sunning myself on the courthouse steps when Webb drove his bays onto the square, and I shouted: "Howdy, Charlie! Mornin', Webb!"

They just jumped down to the cobblestones, not saying anything. Then they just stood there stiff as pokers, with faces set hard and eyes looking like burnt holes in a blanket. I could see that something was bad wrong, so I walked across the lawn to the wagon and asked, with a queer feeling hanging to my heart, "What's happened, boys?"

Charlie jerked his thumb toward the wagon bed, still not speaking and looking stark and barren as if his soul had been wrenched out by the roots. Jay was covered with an old crazy quilt, but I knew he was underneath before ever I turned back the cover. I took one look, and flapped the quilt back quick, feeling queasy in the pit of my stomach, for I'd always liked the lad in spite of all his deviltry and wayward ways.

"Was it an accident?" I asked foolishly, knowing no such blow could have been accidental.

"Yeah." It was Webb answered me, looking at me as if he didn't see me, his voice flat and toneless. "It was an accident."

Charlie glanced at me corner-eyed. "We ain't wantin' no law, Jedge Burleigh. We just brung Jay in to get him buried decent. If law is needin', we-uns will be our own law."

That was all I got out of them. I didn't argue with them. I might have warned them that I had my own sworn word to uphold, and if they got into trouble over Jay's murder I'd have to prosecute, but I didn't say it. I reckoned they knew that, and anyway, it wouldn't have made any difference. I just said this was a terrible thing, and was there anything I could do.

Webb shook his head. "Thank ye kindly, Jedge Burleigh. No. I reckon we-uns don't need any help. We brung Jay up from a little shaver and we can keer for him now."

They got him buried decent all right. But first, of course, there was the coroner's inquest in Macklin's Funeral Parlor, with half the county jammed into the little chapel and spilling out into the square. We subpoenaed Milly Slocum and her father Ben, and the Regan boys, Tom and Luther. Even Johnny Kellogg was summoned, but the coroner didn't keep him but a few minutes. We tried to get hold of Ike Regan, too, but he was already gone when the constable got to the Regan place.

THE coroner worried it out of them bit by bit, and even Charlie and Webb talked a little. They said that Jay had been clearing a patch of timber for strawberries. When he didn't come home for supper, and wasn't back even for breakfast, Charlie and Webb went looking. When they found him beside the half-felled red oak, he'd been dead all night. The rest of the story we got from the county sheriff, who investigated the scene of the crime, and from Milly Slocum.

There were tracks a-plenty around Jay's little clearing—all Jay's, so far as we could tell. Whoever did for Jay Murdock had stood directly behind him on a carpet of leaves. Jay's ax was still sunk half-blade deep in the bole of the red oak, but the murder weapon was gone. We didn't think much about the missing weapon then.

Milly told her story without tears, but with her face dead white and her eyes wild and wary like some forest animal's. Jay Murdock and Ike Regan had both been a-courting her. Neither of them had got far, because old Ben Slocum didn't take kindly to them. Ike made threats, and Milly felt beholden to warn Jay. Jay had laughed and said he could take care of any Regan who crossed his path.

It was easy to see how two young bucks could get into trouble over Milly Slocum, even there on the witness stand, with her eyes all red and her face as blanched as a ghost's. She had old Ben's raven hair, and even the tight knot at the nape of her neck couldn't stretch the wave out of it. She stood straight as a sapling, and her face was like that of a sultry angel, her forehead broad, her nose aquiline, her full mouth slightly sullen.

We got a search party after that, and searched hills and the backwoods high and low. Even though the coroner's verdict was murder at the hands of a person or persons unknown, we knew who we were looking for. But we couldn't find hide nor hair of Ike Regan.

I SPENT a lot of time after that, bird hunting when the trees dropped their leaves, and chasing fox and coon with Johnny Kellogg and his hounds when the frost was on the ground. I had an idea that Ike Regan was holed up somewhere out in the mountains, with his kin slipping him tobacco and supplies, and I shivered many's the night away out there, watching and listening, seeing nothing and hearing nothing. So far as Johnny and I could find, Ike had got clean out of the country.

We gave it up when Johnny's big coon hound, Gabriel's Trumpet, come to grief. Milly Slocum come to tell me about it, She said, "Poor Johnny, his heart's broke, Jedge Burleigh. Gabriel's Trumpet was drowned by a big coon beneath the scum ice on Cowskin River last week." Johnny swore he'd never own another dog as long as he lived. He had three hounds, but Gabriel was his favorite. He loved that big dog like a baby, Johnny did.

Well, that was the way things stood, and it looked like that was the way things would stay. Jay dead and

(*Continued on page 49*)

Milly Slocum told her story without tears, but with her face dead white.

GYPSIES DON'T FORGET

Liberty's SHORT, SHORT STORY

The Nazis drive a hard bargain, but their purchase turns out to be a cargo of hate

BY HARTLEY E. HOWE and LIEUTENANT ROBERT G. PEARSON

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM REUSSNIG

THE man was bearlike, with his great chest and mighty shoulders, but he slipped into the empty chair with the quick, easy grace of a cat. His face was big, too—swarthy, with the blank, impassive expression of a man who has learned to keep his thoughts to himself. But his eyes danced with a curious golden-brown light which, when he smiled, gave him the look of a boy. Now he was smiling at the startled face of the man at the table with him, a fat little Syrian.

"Well," said the little man, "well," and sucked in his breath.

"Come," said the big fellow, "is that any way to greet an old friend, Ahmed?"

"Lazlo!" said the little man. "Lazlo Nagy! Now I know there is a god who protects all thieves. I had heard you were dead. And now—here you are in Beirut!"

The big man smiled again. "It takes more than bullets to kill a gypsy. Perhaps it was convenient that the police were so confident of their aim. They never look so hard for a dead man. But if you will pardon me, I will introduce myself. Kozetzky is the name—Josef Kozetzky, Flight Sergeant, Number 186952."

Ahmed choked suddenly in his glass. "This is not the first time you have had a—"

"Christening for convenience?"

"Exactly. But excuse me, sergeant, you have no glass. Waiter!" he called across the crowded little café, packed with soldiers of half a dozen nations.

"And with the new name I see you have a new profession," the Syrian went on.

The sergeant's smile widened into a grin. "Perhaps. But uniforms are fashionable this year and I was always one to follow the fashion."

The liquor arrived at the table. The Syrian plunged a fat hand into his pocket.

"No, no," protested the sergeant, hauling forth an enormous roll of bills. "All is on me. Everything. I have plenty."

Ahmed whistled. "Have you found a way to combine flying an airplane with, say, borrowing horses?"

The big man shook his head. "No. I have acquired a new character along with my other new possessions. There is no time for our little games of the old days now. When the big thieves are abroad the little thieves must combine with the honest folk to fight back, or soon there will be nothing left worth stealing."

"Dice, then," said the Syrian, an eager gleam in his eye, "or cards?"

"It was a business venture," replied the soldier—"a coup, you might say—which I wound up just before I came down to this forsaken hole to become a military man.

"The year before Germany moved into the Balkans I spent in southern Hungary, where I was running a flying school. Of course I had no pupils to speak of—or at least not enough to make it very worth while financially, and besides, I was never meant to be a pedagogue. So there would have been very little profit in the business if it hadn't been that my lessons took me frequently over the border—sometimes into Rumania, sometimes south into Yugoslavia. You see, it was surprising what I'd find in the plane when I landed—little packages of this and that which the Hungarian customs would have been interested in.

"It was because pupils were so few indeed that I was particularly interested when a gentleman approached me. Very respectable and solid-looking he was, like a successful broker. Indeed, that's what he said he was, a broker from Budapest. I would have put it nearer Bremen.

"'You are used to flying over the border,' he said to me, 'and you know the country to the south of here like the back of your hand. I could use a person who has that kind of knowledge. Would you be interested in making some money?'

"'Money,' I answered him, 'is a very handy thing to have around. This is a very pleasant town and I like it. I like the cafés and I like the Tokay. Most of all I like the pretty girls. But these things take money. Yes, I would be interested.'

"'I have some friends who have money,' he tells me. 'These friends would like very much to pay a visit to Yugoslavia. But the nature of their business in our neighbor country makes it necessary for them to carry some pieces of luggage which would . . . well . . . which might subject them to embarrassing questions by the authorities. It occurred to me that you might like to make a little money flying them across the border.' he said.

"'It could be done,' I told him. 'It could be done. But it would be expensive. Who pays?'

"'Oh, you don't need to worry about the money,' explained my solid-looking business man. 'My friends are very well connected indeed. Payment in advance.'

"But still I didn't quite like the sound of it. Better a live teacher than a dead banker is my motto. So I stalled.

"'I don't believe I can leave my pupils,' I tell him. 'After all, I have my business to look after.'

"'I hope you are not proving stubborn,' said he. 'If money does not tempt you — well — there are other ways.'

"'Such as?' I asked.

"'Herr Nagy,' he said, 'you have had a very interesting career.' And with that he hauled out a little paper with a long list of dates and places and names concerned in various business ventures in my past. He had it all straight, too. Things I thought *nobody* knew about.

"'I think you will agree, sir,' he went on, polite as could be, 'that it would be highly inconvenient for you if this list should turn up on the desk of the Prefect of Police some morning. . . . Surely you agree?'

"I agreed all right. A tidy profit on one side and trouble, lots of it, on the other. What else could I do? One must live."

The Syrian interrupted with a sputter: "This is a dangerous story to tell here, my friend. And in that uniform, too! The British are quick with the firing squad these days . . ."

The soldier downed his drink and continued, ignoring the other: "We worked out a good bargain. They wanted nothing with a suspicious trade-mark. So, except for the tools of their business, I furnished everything. I provided the plane and the gasoline. I provided the provisions and equipment. I even supplied them with their parachutes. For furnishing all, and for flying them to the places they wanted to visit, I got three hundred dinars a man. Twelve men in all. Not bad, eh?"

The Syrian snorted, but the flight sergeant went on:

"The night I took them over was darker than the inside of my stomach. I put the first two men in the rear seat of my plane, and took off. In a few minutes we were over the

"Come," said the big fellow, "is that any way to greet an old friend, Ahmed?"

border. I went on, a hundred kilometers southward. Over a heavy patch of woods, my passengers bailed out, and I headed back for the next two.

"'Three hundred dinars,' I said to myself every time a man bailed out and disappeared into the blackness. 'Three hundred dinars!'

"All night I flew. Six trips in all and no two to the same place. It was like ringing up money on a cash register. Every time a man jumped, I rang up three hundred dinars in my pocket. Twelve times before I got back home for good, with the east showing gray."

"Just a minute, now!" exploded Ahmed. "You aren't the business man you were when we worked together, Lazlo. Look," he traced imaginary figures on the table with a grubby forefinger. "Gasoline, one hundred and fifty dinars. Operating expenses, fifty dinars at least. And you say you furnished food and equipment, too! Why, the parachutes alone must have cost you eighty dinars a man! That wouldn't leave much profit for such a filthy job."

The soldier smiled again, but the lights were missing from his eyes, which were now black and hard. Absently he reached up and fingered the name stitched brightly in red on his shoulder—POLAND.

"My broker friend knew much, but one thing he forgot: Even gypsies have a family. My tribe was taking horses to the great fair in Vilna when the Nazis came over the Polish border in '39. A Panzer division found them on a narrow road—vans, horses, cows, men, women, and children. My people. The road was narrow through a heavy forest. The Nazis were in a hurry. They went ahead. . . . When it was over, there was a red smear a quarter mile long—and a dozen people left alive out of three hundred. One of those left was my cousin Chikno. He came south that winter and told me."

The Syrian was puzzled. "You are a strange man, Lazlo! I thought gypsies revenged their blood—but you do business with these devils. And not even for a good profit!"

The gypsy's hard smile held. "Not quite without a profit, Ahmed. I am a thrifty man and a close bargainer, even for a gypsy. Obviously I had to cut corners here and there—certain necessary economies.

"So, my friend, in the case of every one of my customers, I made one necessary economy. I eliminated the parachute inside the pack."

THE END

HOW LONG BEFORE VICTORY?

Victory in Europe is possible this year. A military analyst noted for right guesses explains how a combined Anglo-American-Soviet offensive can finish the job in less than six months

By MAX WERNER

PROTRACTED warfare creates a time delusion. Once a war has lasted a long time, it is presumed that it will be still further protracted and drag along at the same pace. That is what happened in 1918 in the Allied camp, when no one thought victory would come that very year. Today again many in the United States and England believe that the war in Europe is bound to last for years to come.

But today it is the Nazis who like to talk of a prolonged war, since their blitzkrieg has definitely failed. Because *they* cannot end the war nor set any date for their victory, they are trying to convince their own people and the world that they can continue the war at their will.

This is not true. The conflict in Europe will not last beyond 1944. Military decision may even come toward the end of 1943. *To attain victory we need three to six months of offensive fighting with all available Anglo-American-Soviet forces.* We cannot know when this fighting will begin. But once it starts—on several fronts, carried on with unceasing blows—then victory can be won in a major battle lasting from three to six months. It will be the Battle of Europe.

Protracted warfare is already behind us. Before us lies the opportunity for speedy decision. Soon the second World War will enter its fifth year. Today we are already in the last quarter of the war. Entry into the final phase changes the tempo of the fighting. The static conduct of war is replaced by a dynamic one.

Let us examine a little more closely how that happens—for it is happening right *now*. In a war between great powers a relative balance of forces exists for a fairly long period of time. Major battles are waged, but they remain indecisive. Meantime one side gathers strength while the other grows weaker. There follows a blow delivered by the stronger side. It has the effect of an explosion. Next comes a period of great surprises; the duration of the war is now determined by the duration of the great blow.

That is what happened in World War I. For four years, from August, 1914, to July, 1918, its course was indecisive. There followed the great Allied offensive and the war was decided and finished within four months.

The day of victory is not the day of unconditional surrender nor the day when the Allies march through the streets of Berlin. Victory—that means the great decisive military operation. How long will that operation last? In World War I the Allied offensive started on July 18, 1918. It was fully unfolded on August 8, in the victory of Amiens. In the first half of October, Germany's military defeat was already a fact. Only the mopping-up operations remained. In November the Allies could have taken the whole German Army prisoner and could have marched into Berlin. In World War I victory was an operation that lasted from the full development of the Allied offensive at the beginning of August to the climax of the great offensive at the beginning of October, by which time the German Army was smashed. It took two months.

The war of attrition has been waged against Germany since June, 1941. The first half of World War II was far less intense than World War I. The second half—which began with the German-Russian war—has been far more so. Today the war of attrition against Germany bears fruit. German losses are huge. The élite of the German Army was mowed down on the Russian front. In the winter campaign of 1942-43 the German High Command was unable, until three months after the victorious Russian offensive had started, to get together the twenty-five divisions that were necessary to save the Wehrmacht from final collapse in southern Russia. In February, 1943, Goebbels wrote in his weekly Das Reich: "The front needs men and not fur coats." In the winter of 1941-42 there was a shortage of warm clothing on the German front; in the winter of 1942-43 there was a shortage of troops.

But the German war crisis does not consist merely in progressive exhaustion. Today German strategy must pay for its incredible blunders: for the wasting of troops in the first phase of the war and the faulty planning of the offensives in Russia. The time has now come when Mars can

present Hitler with a frightful bill.

Three statements about the further course of the war can now be made:

1. The German Army can no longer score any great strategic victories. At best it can attain tactical successes. It cannot win. It cannot give the war a decisive turn in Germany's favor. In April of this year Goebbels openly admitted why the German people are so depressed and what difficulties German propaganda faces. Germany, Goebbels wrote, had won victories only in the first two thirds of the war; Germany had won no victories since the summer of 1942.

Well, the time of German victories will not return.

2. The latest date for the termination of the war in Europe is the end of 1944. Physically Germany cannot endure war beyond that time. The state of German exhaustion runs parallel to the Anglo-American concentration of forces and the unfolding of Soviet military strength. Combined, these factors make a mathematical certainty of German defeat by the end of 1944 at the latest. Within the next eighteen months a tremendous shift in the balance of belligerent forces is going to take place—to the disadvantage of Germany. It is possible but not certain that the Wehrmacht can endure another winter campaign in 1943-44. It is quite certain that it will not be able to endure still another one in 1944-45.

3. Yet it is also possible that the Wehrmacht might be beaten in the second half of 1943, provided a powerful and co-ordinated combined Anglo-American-Soviet offensive starts this summer. Under those circumstances victory in Europe is a possibility by the end of 1943. This would not yet mean that the war in Europe had ended before 1944. But it would mean that the anti-Hitler coalition had forced the military decision, after which essentially mopping-up operations would remain. It would mean that by the end of 1943 there could not be the slightest doubt about the final outcome of the war and its swift termination.

WE must realize clearly why this briefer variant of the war with swifter victory is possible. The anti-Hitler coalition has already attained material superiority. The battle of production is definitely won. In 1943 the arms production of the United States, Great Britain, and Russia will be about 3 to 1 compared to Germany's. Even if we consider transportation difficulties and U-boat warfare, arms superiority over Germany is still secured this year.

Moreover, the anti-Hitler coalition has military supremacy too, especially in troops ready for combat. The Red Army has greater reserves than the Wehrmacht. The Anglo-American forces on the British Isles, in North Africa and the Near East are stronger than the German forces in western and southern Europe. The Soviet and Anglo-American forces that are concentrated all around Hitler Europe are stronger than the entire Wehrmacht in Europe. The combined anti-Hitler forces throughout Europe have more infantry divisions, more planes, tanks, and guns than the Wehrmacht. What the anti-Hitler coalition now needs is strategic superiority, superiority on the battlefield. And that means an Anglo-American invasion and a Russian offensive.

How long before victory? The answer to this question is not merely a matter of time calculation. It means time calculation *for action*, for the duration of battles. The last great Russian offensive lasted three months, from the middle of November, 1942, to the middle of February, 1943. It brought the Red Army to the brink of victory and the Wehrmacht to the brink of defeat. In February, 1943, forty more Russian divisions on the offensive and a simultaneous Anglo-American blow in Europe could have attained the final defeat of the Wehrmacht. There is an important admission to the effect that the Third Reich would have been unable to stave off the invasion had it come in the winter of 1942-43, together with the Russian offensive. This admission was made by Hans Fritsche, who is second to Goebbels in the Third Reich's propaganda machine.

TO attain victory, a new Russian offensive on the scale of the 1942-43 winter campaign and an Anglo-American invasion are necessary. If the Red Army launches a new offensive, it will be able to achieve tremendous results within the same period as before. It is possible that a German offensive attempt will precede the Russian offensive in the course of this year. The great German offensive of 1942 in southeastern Russia lasted four and a half months, from the beginning of July to the middle of November. But more than two months of that period were taken up by the assault on Stalingrad, at which time the front line was already stabilized on the whole. It is a certainty that if the Germans start an offensive on the Russian front this year, it will be halted and repulsed by the Red Army more swiftly than in 1942. It might delay a Russian offensive for a short time, but not for long.

Paradoxical though it may sound, a Hitler offensive will shorten the duration of the war and accelerate the tempo of German defeat. If Hitler should stake everything on one card—the great offensive in Russia—then that card will lose. In the offensive Germany would waste the forces she needs for her defense.

If the new Russian offensive has the intensity and military effectiveness of the last one, it must bring a military decision within *three* months, provided that this time the Anglo-American blow is delivered simultaneously. In three months, from the middle of November, 1942, to the middle of February, 1943, the Red Army traversed over 400 miles in an east-west direction, the distance from Stalingrad to Constantinograd (east of Poltava). If the Red Army now captures a similar area from its present front lines in the south, then it will stand far to the west of Kiev, not far from the former Russo-Polish border. If it should advance such a distance from its present front lines in the north, from Velikiye Luki, then it would already be deep in East Prussia. In both cases the German front would collapse.

THE Russian winter offensive of 1942-43 has shown what can be attained militarily within a period of three months. In this relatively brief span of time about 100 German and satellite divisions were smashed and losses of over 800,000 prisoners and dead inflicted on the enemy. Large-scale operations for victory demand battles of encirclement and annihilation; war of movement and large-scale maneuvers; severing of enemy communications; overcoming of enemy defenses. All that was included in the last Russian offensive and one may well expect that it will be repeated in the next one. The anti-Hitler coalition needs operations of this type for victory, and the Red Army has already shown that such operations can be carried out against the Wehrmacht.

The Tunisian campaign has proved that the Anglo-American troops master this kind of offensive strategy too. And the outcome of the fighting in Tunisia has shown that a swift collapse and capitulation of crack German troops is possible. Power means speed. The lesson of Tunisia is this: concentration of forces brings swift decision. As soon as powerful Anglo-American forces appear on the European war theater the course of the war will change, the tempo of the war will be tremendously stepped up. The German one-front war will be at an end.

But the Anglo-American forces in Europe will not merely supplement the Red Army. In addition they can hit German strategic and economic centers from the west, from short distances. And from the south they can deliver blows against the poorly protected or almost unprotected sectors of the European continent. The Red Army cannot do either; tremendous distances separate it from the German centers and it faces a consolidated German land front everywhere. Combined, however, the forces of the anti-Hitler coalition can carry out operations for victory which will include everything: blows against strongest German concentrations (in Russia); blows against Germany's strategic and economic centers (in the west); and blows against the soft underbelly of the Axis (in the south).

Operations for victory will be mil-

(*Continued on page 69*)

She looked anywhere but at him. "Other wives are there, but you don't want me."

WHEREVER YOU ARE

To be a bride yet not a wife was more than Bess could stand—yet did she dare act as her heart prompted?

BY WARE TORREY BUDLONG

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKS

YOU don't expect to be told in a quiet tone that a piece of sky just fell down in the back yard. You don't expect any one to say casually, "Oh, by the way, here's that million dollars you dreamed about having." There should be some sort of bells ringing in people's voices when they tell some kinds of news.

Maybe Bess's father didn't understand about that. Anyway, he just put his head around the corner of

ner door and said calmly, "Oh, Bess, Jerry's on the phone."

Bess stared at him without speaking. She didn't move to get out of her chair.

"Jerry's phoning," her father remarked again. "Long distance." Then he went away.

Bess got up slowly. How was she going to talk on the phone with her throat tied in a knot and her heart banging up into her ears?

She walked downstairs, getting herself ready to be cool and friendly to Jerry—not too glad he'd called, not excited, not excited at all. Because she wasn't going to believe in Jerry any more. Not after he'd gone away to camp without proposing, without asking her to wait for him, without even saying he loved her.

She'd been crazy to think he would—just because they had clicked so well so fast—just because she had wanted him so desperately to ask her. After all, they'd only known each other a few short weeks. He had come to town, they had met and gone on from there, and he had enlisted. He'd liked her, but that didn't mean he wanted her to marry him. As far as her own feeling went, all he had to do when he said good-by was say, "I'll be back, Bess," and that would have been enough. But he didn't say even that.

TELLING him good-by that early morning, his new uniform had made him look strange, but that didn't matter when she knew so well the feel of his mouth, knew how it felt to run her hand along that firm chin and catch the faint pricking in her palm.

"Good-by, Jerry," she had said, still waiting.

He kissed her quickly but so hard she could feel it for hours afterward. He took her shoulders and moved her a step away, looking at her intently.

"Good-by, Bess," he said again.

And then, incredibly, he had gone without another word. He didn't even turn once to wave. He went past the place by the gate where they always said good night. He went past the willow path where they walked Saturday afternoons, the path that was wide enough to walk side by side and narrow enough so Jerry's hand would brush hers as they walked. He went on out of sight.

The letters she had had from him in the two months since that morning had been short and tight and hurried. So what else could she do but try to cut him out and thrust him away and not believe in him before she could get hurt any more? After all, how well did she know him? Not well at all, her mind told her; better than she knew any one else in the world, some other wisdom retorted. And now—now she must talk to him on the phone and be as matter-of-fact as he.

The phone looked queerly unfamiliar. It sat there on the living-room table black and stolid. Bess picked up the receiver, and Jerry's voice said, "Hello," and the telephone came alive in her hand.

"Hello, Jerry," she said, her voice steady.

"You don't sound natural," said Jerry.

She didn't feel natural. She felt as if her heart were going to explode any minute.

"I won a phone call," Jerry said surprisingly. "I had to talk to you, Bess. Only—there's about a million people listening."

"What?" Bess said. "What did you say, Jerry?"

"I said there were about a million people listening. I'm in a big room, Bess. I'm standing on a platform with a lot of people here listening to me phone. I won the phone call, and it's being broadcast."

"Broadcast—" she said, feeling very small and naked.

So that was what the funny noise was on the wire that she could hear dimly behind his voice—people round him, close to the phone—people listening to every word he said. And more people, all over the country, listening on their radios.

"Bess?" Jerry was saying. "Some soldier gets a free phone call every week, and I got it this time, and there's a whole gang here—"

She wished he would stop wasting time. "How are you?" she asked him.

"It's been so long," he said suddenly.

The sound of his voice was doing queer things to her, as if she had walked around a corner and found him close to her. Now was the time to remember to be matter-of-fact. Bess hung onto the phone.

"Listen, Bess," Jerry began. Then his voice stuck and he stopped. "I want—" he said, then stopped again.

SHE could see the clock from where she sat. There he was, right there at the other end of the wire, and the clock ticking on. She tried to remember just one of the things she'd wanted to say to him for weeks.

"Jerry," she heard herself saying, "Jerry, I've got your picture under my pillow."

And his voice came back to her fast as her heartbeat: "Bess, I've got to ask you something—"

"Yes?" she said.

"Bess, would you marry a soldier?" he asked her slowly.

That was when her breathing stopped and then went on in pounding jerks. "What soldier?"

"Me," said Jerry.

"Oh—yes, Jerry," her voice answered before she told it to, and she could hear the joy in her own voice like a new separate thing.

"Darling—" Jerry fairly shouted it. "Angel blessed darling—do you mean it? Bess, you did say 'yes,' didn't you?"

"Yes," she said. "Yes—yes—yes—"

"You're wonderful," Jerry was saying fervently. "You're the most wonderful, adorable—"

There was a sudden pause. Then "Oh, Lord," said Jerry.

"What? What's the matter, Jerry?"

"My sainted aunt," he said in a strangled tone. "All these people—I forgot all about 'em when you said that about the picture."

She could hear the confused hum of voices at his end of the wire; she could picture Jerry—probably gripping the phone with one hand and worrying his hair with the other.

"I forgot too," she said in a small voice.

"WELL," said Jerry, evidently struggling for aplomb, "well, Bess, I guess you're the most publicly proposed-to girl in the country."

"Well, then," she returned, "you're the most publicly accepted man."

"I could get special leave to be married," he told her. "We'd only have three days probably—"

"That's marvelous," she reassured him. "How soon, darling?"

She could hear Jerry sigh with relief. "You're a wonder, Bess. You're the most wonderful— Oh, Lord, there I go again! Damn it, how can I say anything?"

Bess could hear a strange man's voice near the phone shouting to Jerry, "You're doing fine, pal. Go on, tell her."

"Holy smoke," said Jerry, sounding more strangled than ever.

"Never mind," she told him. "I know, Jerry."

"No, you don't," he burst out. "Why, the way I feel about you—no, I can't do it—how can I talk to you this way?"

"Can they hear me too?" she asked.

"She's not being broadcast, is she?" Jerry asked some one desperately, and then he said to Bess, "No, nobody can hear you but me."

There was a roar of laughing and applause in the background, with Jerry's voice through it saying, "Go on, dear."

"Well," she said, "I was going to say I love you."

"What?" said Jerry.

"I love you," she said again.

"Speak louder," said Jerry.

"*I love you,*" she said, putting her heart into it all right. And then she caught on, and added, "You gyp, Jerry, you heard me all the time."

"Oh—darling—" he said. "Maybe that will last me till I get there. You won't have much warning, Bess. Will your father get the license?"

"He'll tend to everything," she answered. "Wire me when you start."

"Listen, Bess." He dropped his voice till it was almost a whisper. "Can you hear me?"

"Yes," she said, whispering too.

"I'm mad about you—" Jerry began. He stopped abruptly. "They've got an amplifier on this damned thing," he said.

"Write it," she said. "Tell me—"

"There goes the warning bell," Jerry interrupted her. "Listen— Oh, the hell with everybody! I love you. Good-by." There was a click, and he was gone.

SLOWLY her fingers loosened on the receiver, slowly she laid it down. Emotion numbed her and she shivered hotly. Then her mind went on as sharply as an electric light, sending streaky shadows over her emotion. Now what had she done? Plunged wildly ahead, saying "yes." How did she know what impulse, what sudden surge of loneliness had made Jerry ask her? After all, he hadn't asked her when he went away.

Then a rush of feeling swept against her doubts. He had asked her—she was going to marry him. Surely, loving him as she did, it would all work out. She must hold on to that—

Something jogged her knee. Her small sister Holly was sitting cross-legged on the floor, looking up at her entranced.

"You certainly yelled when you told him you loved him," said Holly with sober interest.

"Just how long have you been here?" Bess demanded.

"All the time," Holly said. "As soon as you got squiggles in your voice I came right in. And there's some neighbors out under the front windows. You sounded swell."

Bess took a long breath and opened her mouth to speak. Then her mother and father came in with solemn smiles, and some assorted neighbors followed, and she didn't have time to be embarrassed.

From then on she didn't have time for much of anything, with telegrams coming from Jerry, and her mother following her around with a list in one hand and pieces of trousseau in the other. Bess went straight on ahead, never looking sideways at doubt, as though she followed a tunnel with her marriage at the end.

Finally the telegram came saying he was starting, and long hours after, he was there in the front hall, looking at her, not speaking, not even touching her yet. He looked older—he looked tireder—he looked just the same.

"Jerry—" she said.

Then he was holding her tightly, till she burned in darkness with his mouth on hers. His hands loosened slowly and stayed touching her.

"Today?" he said almost fiercely, then again, more softly, "Today?"

"Yes," she answered, her voice foggy. "Everything is ready."

There was a moment when she might have paused to look ahead, to stop and listen to what Jerry was trying to say. But some kind of desperation gripped her and helped her on.

"Bess," he said, there in the hallway, "are you sure? I didn't mean to ask you that time on the phone—I rushed at you—" Some trouble was dark in his eyes, and she heard the little footsteps of terror just behind her, and hurried on.

"Of course I'm sure," she said.

An hour from that time they were married, and nothing was real, and everything was more real than all the rest of her life. The short train ride passed in a rushing of faces and damp smoke, with Jerry's hand holding hers steadily.

The hotel room was as impersonal as a picture when she stepped into it, and later she knew she had never lived anywhere else. Lying on the bed, she touched the wallpaper with a lazy finger. The paper had hysterical little blue roses climbing an endless trellis.

"I know all about these roses," she said in that new relaxed voice.

"So do I," Jerry said. His dark eyes smiled at her. "Do you feel as if you'd lived here all your life?"

"Yes," she said. "Except that when I remember I really haven't lived here, it seems such an awful waste."

Jerry ran a finger thoughtfully down her nose. "And we're going to live here forever, aren't we?" His eyes challenged hers to agree.

"Yes," she said, setting a fire curtain at the end of their two days, turning with him into the two days and nights, without looking on ahead. Because when you got to the end of wanting, that was the place to rest.

So their new shining time ran on forever, and daytime hours and nighttime hours flowed together, and the end of the two days caught them by the throat. They packed in a frenzy without looking at each other. Jerry picked up his cap and stood looking at the floor.

Bess looked at their bags, strapped shut, by the door. She flung herself toward him and he caught her as hard. "We can't—" she said.

"It's our room," said Jerry, holding her head down so she didn't see his face. "How can it belong to any one else? It doesn't belong to the hotel either—that's ridiculous. They're our blue roses—"

"As long as I live," said Bess, "I'll close my eyes and see this room."

"The first time I waked up and saw you asleep—" said Jerry.

"The first time you went to get a paper, and came in and said, 'Hello, Mrs. Sanders—'"

"The first time I saw you brush your hair—"

"The first time—Jerry, I can't go. I can't bear it."

He held her firmly till she got her courage back. "Let's go quickly," he said then. And they went out, holding hands, still not looking at each other.

On the train again, they didn't talk for a while. Now that their private time was over and the future was just in front of them, Bess looked ahead into it. Anyway, he wouldn't be walking away from her this time. She'd be living near him as long as she could, long enough to see him often, so they could build strongly together and pile up a wall of memories ready for the time when he'd go overseas.

"What's the town like that's near your camp?" she asked him.

"Blairville? A dump," he said, "and jammed to the roofs."

Well, it wouldn't matter if she had a room right up under the roof. She wondered what it would be like to be so much alone after living with her family wrapped all around her. But it would be just time to get through between the real times of being with him.

"YOU don't look like a bride any more," Jerry remarked with a quick grin.

"That's too bad—"

"No, it isn't," he said. "This is better."

"I thought people went on being brides for months," she said dubiously.

"Uh-uh."

"When did I stop, Jerry?"

"Under the blue roses."

"Oh." She reflected. "What do I look like now?"

"A lot like a little girl. But enough like a wife."

"That's lucky."

The train jerked to a halt at their station, and they got out to be submerged by relatives and friends. Bess walked between her parents, but she had one hand behind her holding on to Jerry's sleeve. A great many greetings later, she was back in her family's house, back in the blue-and-brown living room. The room was remote; she looked at it from a long new distance.

People drifted away tactfully till there was just the family left, her mother and father and Holly, sitting there, looking at her and Jerry. It felt strange to have Jerry there;

(*Continued on page 53*)

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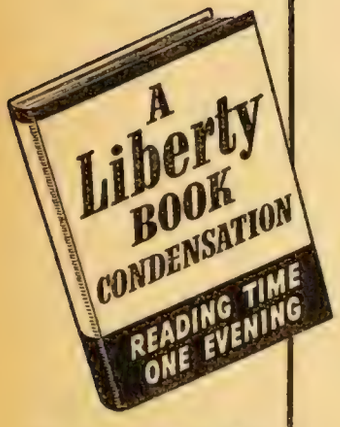

ILLUSTRATED BY PETER KUHLHOFF

Its publishers describe this book as the story of "a three-man woman in a two-gun town."

It is a story of the old West in which a stranger, a beautiful girl, two brothers, and their mother go through an exciting, tragic adventure.

John Chamberlain reports in the New York Times that William Allen White, a Book of the Month Club judge, "has plucked people by the sleeve and urged them to read it."

WHEN the train slowed down for Pahoka City, I stepped carefully across the coupling blocks and planted myself in the blank doorway of the baggage car, to help conceal myself from trainmen going past.

The engineer began to use his air. All the cars bumped and scraped, and I pressed back in the car's doorway, listening, beginning to breathe again.

The brakeman appeared. "All right," he said. "Get down!"

I dropped alongside the car, and the brakie made a fist.

"Go on," he said. "Get traveling!"

"I was traveling," I said, and started up the track.

I glanced at the rear coach. That was when I first saw her. She was standing on the platform, looking puzzled and helpless.

I guessed she was about twenty-one. She wore a black traveling suit with big flat white pearl buttons on the jacket, and the jacket was very tight. She was small and well shaped, though her hips were a little broad.

I dropped my bundle and went to the last coach. "You want to get off, lady?"

She studied my clothes. "You're just a hobo, aren't you?"

"I was on this train. If you'll slide that big bag where I can grab it, I'll set it down for a step."

She moved the bag a little. I put it on the cinders and reached up for the other bag, and then held my free hand to the girl.

The girl started toward the station. I carried her bags to the window by the signal post, where she was already talking with the station agent.

"Hanrahan?" The agent thought a moment. "Why," he said finally, "they moved out, with creditors chasing them."

"When?" she cried, her face pasty under the veil.

"Month or so back," said the expressman.

Steam burst from the engine. The conductor's voice sounded thin. The train left Pahoka City.

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At the other end of the platform I gathered up my bundle. The main street ran up a slope of prairie opposite the station. I could see rows of wooden store fronts and three or four teams tied and waiting.

Then I knew that I had to put her out of my mind. This was one of the most important jobs I had ever been called to do. I couldn't get mixed up with a girl.

Nevertheless I heard her addressing the agent: "Mister, would it be all right if I left my satchels in the office place awhile?"

I started toward the stores. At the foot of the slope there was a horse trough and pump. I crossed the ruts of a very bad road and washed at the pump. As I was drying my face, I observed the young woman walking into a store on top of the hill. Far south on the prairie, the retreating train blew and wailed.

Now I thought of eating; but as I stood there, my attention was drawn to a figure moving up the road.

He toiled up the slope, with something across his

shoulder: a camera—a big one with three stiff red legs. He might have been sixty, he might have been sixty-five. His eyes were sad and weak behind smudged glasses, and the eyelids sank in red pouches. He had a dirty yellow-white beard and a smell of whisky about him.

"Water," he said, as he reached the pump. He drank from the well spout. "God's best gift, even in these parts."

"You take pictures for a living?" I asked him.

"I wish I could do nothing else. But there isn't enough picture taking to be done in Bush County, so I got me a little store. I sell paints and patent medicines. You got an unfamiliar face, stranger."

"My name is Rich Williams. I was riding the blinds, trying to make Tulsa. They pitched me off here."

We shook hands. "The name, sir, is Lucian Barrow."

"That brakie," I said, wishing to bring up the subject of the railroad again, "he had a heavy hand."

"Don't blame the brakeman, son," he said. "The S. C. & W. is nervous these days. They had robberies awhile back. Train robbers stopped the night train near Eagle Hill."

I wanted to know how any train robbers could stop one of those fast passengers.

"You know these cartridge things that railroads light for signals? There was one beside the track by the Eagle Hill curve, a flare that meant caution—so the engineer went slow. He got around the curve, and there was a torpedo that meant stop."

Barrow pretended to be a train stopping.

"Three men come down on him. One was an Indian with a shotgun; they all had pillowcases over their heads, with big eyes cut out, but this fat one was an Indian—because he only grunted. And his black braids were sticking down under the pillowcase he wore. I wish I could of got a photograph of that."

He had built a picture in my mind just as if I had not heard the story long before this.

"Folks say they got thousands of dollars," Barrow said, sighing.

A horse stamped close. I thought some one was riding his horse to drink, but the rider wanted Barrow.

"Look here, Barrow." The man on horseback spoke in a low tone. "They're no good. What's the idea?"

"Sure they're good, Mr. Tatum!" cried the old man.

"Well, you whisky-sucker! I want to sell that saloon, and I've got two prospects. I won't send *those* pictures. Nobody would buy on the strength of them. You hustle up and take more, if you know what's good for you!"

Tatum looked at me. "Who are you?" he asked sharply.

"My name is Williams," I told him, "if it matters."

"Don't get gay. Are you looking for work?"

"I might want a job. It depends."

"You want to work cattle?"

I laughed. "I'm a carpenter by trade."

Tatum growled there was no work for any damned carpenter in Pahoka. He rode up toward the stores.

"Who's that?"

Barrow said that was one of the Tatum brothers, and swore. "Those Tatums raise cattle, own Cookson's Bar, and lend money and break folks a-doing it. That's Charley."

I looked at the bleak stores and wondered what had become of the girl. "Ever know the Hanrahans around here?"

Barrow looked around cautiously. "The Tatums stole their place," he whispered. "It was mortgaged for a song and the Tatums foreclosed. They're gone." He asked how I knew of Hanrahan.

"A girl at the depot asked after him. I heard the talk."

There were a few people along the street now, and I looked around and noticed a sign hung in front of a restaurant: KITE'S CAFE. Barrow shuffled away.

I stepped in and ordered. The proprietor measured me scornfully.

"First I want to know if you got any money on you."

As a matter of fact I had seven hundred dollars on me, but it was where no one could find it very easily. I displayed three crumpled dollar bills.

After he had served me, a little cowbell tinkled and the front door opened. The girl came in.

She headed straight for the counter. "Would you be interested in giving me a job?"

"Can you cook, honey?"

She didn't like his calling her honey; I could see her swallowing. "Yes, some."

"What's your name?"

"Annie Lingen. I'm from St. Louis."

His glance wrapped her waist. "I won't pay you much. Maybe six bits a day and your meals."

"Can I start now, mister?"

A BUGGY turned in the roadway outside the front windows. A man got out and came into the restaurant. This young stranger was about thirty and he had the longest, brownest face I ever saw. His gray eyes were restless—just one jump ahead of you, it seemed.

Annie Lingen took his order. While she was busy in the kitchen I studied the customer across the room. He was left-handed and his revolver butt pointed toward the rear. The butt and hammer and most of the trigger guard stood well out of the scorched red holster, and at the lower end the barrel protruded for a good three inches. I couldn't understand why the holster was so small, or the peculiar way in which it dangled from the cartridge belt.

Annie started along behind the counter, heading toward the open room. The proprietor waited there for her to crowd past. One of his hands was hidden. I couldn't see exactly what happened. All I know is, Annie crashed the tray on the counter. Her face was blazing. She picked up the thick cup of coffee and hurled it. Then, with even greater fury, she caught the tray and swung it. Eggs, creamed corn—the whole mess struck the proprietor across the face.

Annie strode back to the corner and began to struggle into her jacket. "Just remember that," she cried, "the next time some poor girl comes in here and tries to work for you—tries to earn a meal—"

She hurried toward the front door. The proprietor came panting after her. "You little devil!" he howled.

A quiet voice spoke: "Oh, Kite."

It was the tan-faced man. He was standing.

"You saw her do it!" Kite babbled.

"Kite," said the young fellow, "if a lady throws victuals, I reckon she has got good reason."

He walked out, climbed into his buggy, and drove away.

Kite said something about having that woman arrested.

"Better not," I advised, and went out and tried to find her, but couldn't anywhere.

IT seemed to me that any traveler looking for work might go into a barbershop if he had a few nickels to improve his appearance. I promptly got a shave, and got the barber and a loafer talking about train robbers without seeming to open the subject myself.

They informed me that the railroad's money box had been found west of Eagle Hill. It had been blown with dynamite and there were fragments of greenbacks caught in the prairie grass. So some of the money had been destroyed. I filed that in my memory, then headed for Cookson's Bar.

Halfway across the dusty road I waited for a horse and rider to pass me. The rider cantered past, on a buckskin pony, a fellow about twenty-four with a thin face and mustache.

At Cookson's I had a beer while I examined the other patrons. There were two, and they sat with the owner—Charley Tatum.

One was a cattleman I had noticed getting off the train that day. The other was the sheriff of Bush County; I knew in advance that his name was Sperry Cantwell. He was a disagreeable-looking fellow.

Charley Tatum was dealing blackjack, so I strolled over to watch. They looked up and nodded. I didn't think Charley Tatum recognized me. But pretty soon he said, "Find any carpentering work?"

"No."

"You won't, smarty," and he went on dealing.

I made a personally conducted tour of the place.

I heard the front door open and close. I looked up, to find the young man I had seen on the buckskin pony.

Prescott—that was the cattleman's name—invited him, "You can play blackjack, Violet, if you've dug up more gold on your land."

"Gold on Goss's land!" exclaimed Tatum derisively.

"Well," said Prescott, "that is what folks say."

"That's what folks say," Violet Goss repeated. "All right, Tatum, deal me in. I'll bet ten dollars."

Tatum dealt a round.

Goss flicked a look at his cards. "Can I split?" he asked mildly.

"Yes," said Tatum, "but not aces."

Violet split, and put down another ten-dollar bill, and Tatum gave him two more down cards. Violet split again, and bet another ten. He looked at his one complete hand. "This is good," he said. "Now, down on these."

A child could have told what was happening. Tatum was going to lose, and I could see he was a rotten loser. Violet Goss looked at his second hand and put the ten-dollar bill on top. He slid his fingers toward the third hand. He was just going to look when a card flipped toward him, face up. It was a six-spot.

"I don't want that card," said Violet. "I didn't ask you to hit me."

"You signaled for a hit. You wiggled your fingers."

"The hell I did!"

"The hell you didn't!" shouted Tatum.

Violet made a motion as if to shove his chair back and stand up. He didn't get to do it. Tatum had hooked his boot around the lower rung of Goss's chair, and he jerked his foot for all he was worth. The chair flew up and Violet sprawled.

Prescott was appalled, but Cantwell took his cue from Charley Tatum. In later moments I was vaguely aware that I had heard the front door open, but I didn't take my eyes off Violet Goss. He was moving his head, trying to get his senses back.

"Tried to cheat me," bellowed Tatum. "So he's smart, is he? Why, I ought to—"

"If I was you," cried Cantwell shrilly, "I would empty that spittoon on him right where he lays!"

"Empty it—hell, I'll crack his dome with it!"

I realized that he meant business. He was actually going to pick up a heavy brass spittoon and crack it against the head of the boy on the floor.

I put my leg out and tripped him as he plunged past. He arose and turned slowly. One trouser leg was torn open at the knee and I could see raw flesh.

Tatum gasped and ripped his hand toward his coat. My own gun was in my bundle at the bar.

Charley Tatum didn't quite get his hand into his pocket, though. A man spoke from the front of the room.

It was the young man whose dinner had been spilled all over Kite by Annie Lingen. At last I understood that peculiar holster of his. He didn't have his gun out, but he was covering Tatum just the same.

The folds of his coat were pushed back and his left hand had grown around the revolver butt. His finger was inside the trigger guard. That holster was fastened on a long smooth rivet—a kind of swivel—and apparently the man always used his gun that way.

Charley Tatum held his hands high.

"Mister," the man with the gun directed me, "get Tatum's revolver and put it back of the bar, so he'll find it when he has need."

I did as I was told. When I turned around, Violet was on his feet, shaking his head.

"All right," Tatum said heavily. "You two Goss boys get out. I've had all I want out of you."

The man with the gun said, "Get your money, Vi."

"This much is mine," said Violet, taking fifty dollars.

I spoke up and said: "I think you won three hands that you were playing. Ten dollars on each—including that one with the six-spot."

Violet Goss said, "I guess that's right, mister."

"Then take your money out of his pile, Vi," said his brother, and Violet counted twenty dollars from Tatum's stack of bills.

Sperry Cantwell growled, "That's robbery. Burglary."

I told him, "No, it isn't—I'll stand witness to that. We call it blackjack where I come from."

"And where's that?" asked Charley Tatum.

"All over," I said, and picked up my bundle.

"Cotton," said Violet, moving to the door, with his brother, "did you pick up Muddy's lamp at the express office?"

"Not yet; but I drove the buggy in for that purpose."

THEY gestured to me, so I followed along with them. Cotton wanted to know why I had tripped Tatum. "I didn't like him."

Then the boys asked if I would tell them something about myself. I gave the name of Rich Williams again. I told about being kicked off the freight.

Cotton looked down at me; he was a head taller.

"Would a place to sleep and feed suit you for a while, even if there wasn't much work attached to it?"

I told him I guessed that would suit any one.

"My name is Goss," he said. "The first name is Cottonwood. This here is my brother Violet. We got a place out on Evening Creek. We got a package to pick up at the express office, so come with me in the buggy."

Violet cantered ahead on his pony.

When we reached the depot, there were voices inside. Violet nodded toward the door, and Cotton and I listened.

Immediately we recognized the voice. It was Annie.

"I don't see why!" she scolded. "You can lock up the office. What do you think I'm going to do—steal?"

"Lady," cried the old agent desperately, "I ain't allowed to do it."

"All right." The girl's voice soared. "I'll sleep in the streets of Pahoka City! Maybe to starve and catch cold—maybe to lead an immoral life—"

Cotton winked at me and led the way inside. We found Annie Lingen—remarkably pretty even in her fury—with her little valise in hand.

"Miss, don't you remember me? You up-ended my dinner all over Cal Kite."

I plucked up courage. "Remember me?"

She began to talk rapidly. She had come to Pahoka

City expecting to find her aunt and uncle, but they were gone for good. She had searched for employment without success. Then she had dragged her suitcase to a variety store up the street and persuaded the storekeeper to buy it. He gave her barely enough money to take her back to St. Louis. She had no money for the hotel and there was no train until morning.

"You got any folks there?" I asked.

"Not any more, mister."

"Well," said Cotton, "I guess the Goss Hotel has another boarder."

Annie Lingen's face was eager. "What do you mean?"

Violet twisted his rat-tail mustache and replied, "Our mother lives with us on Evening Creek, and it would be all right for you to come with us. Maybe in a day or so you can get some track of your uncle—find out where he's gone, maybe."

"All right," she said. "I like you. I like all of you. I'll go."

The agent now called in alarm: "Look here, girl! You don't know these men!"

Annie's head turned. "Do you?"

"Sure do," cried the agent. "Them two are the Goss boys. They've killed men in these parts!"

"They have a mother, haven't they?" demanded Annie Lingen shrilly. "A mother who lives with them?"

The agent stammered, "Oh, yes; quite a mother."

"Then pooh—I'll go with them! You wouldn't let me sleep in your station. I think you're a mean old man!"

"More or less, ma'am," agreed Cotton amiably. To the agent he said, "Jeffson, I reckon we got an express package here. It's Muddy's lamp that she's been pining for."

Violet took Annie Lingen's valise and we escorted her down the platform. Cotton went to the express shed with the growling agent. Presently he joined us, straining under the weight of a wooden box. I helped him to place this carefully in the buggy.

Violet swung one of his grasshopper legs over the polished saddle on his colt. The pony lifted up its forelegs and danced beautifully, with Violet snatching off his black hat to wave at us. He was showing off for a pretty girl, and both of them enjoyed it.

We drove up to the stores again with the pale sunset around us.

"Whereabouts did you sell your stuff, lady?"

"Over there." She pointed. "The Racket Store."

"How much did he pay you, Miss—?"

"Annie, Annie Lingen."

She produced a pathetic roll of bills. Cotton took the money and went into the secondhand store, with Violet and myself close behind.

"The lady don't want to sell after all, Ole," Cotton said. "Here's your money back."

The storekeeper made a sour face. He began to pack clothing and other things into the old extension case.

Cotton and I buckled the straps of the case, and Vi brought out his moneybag. "Here's five dollars for your trouble, Ole."

We returned to the darkening street. We rode west through the marvel of the prairie, Cotton, Annie, and I pressed together in the buggy.

IT was almost more than eager flesh could bear, to be squeezed close to the provocative substance that was Annie Lingen. Cotton and I were suffering together. Neither of us could reply in more than monosyllables to the girl's nervous chatter.

The voice of Violet Goss came sighing back from the gloom ahead. He was daring to sing a song for the girl who had come with us—a tender old song: *"When the springtime comes, gentle Annie, when the wildflowers are scattered o'er the plain."* He sang on and on.

Cotton turned to Annie and asked, "Is your name Annie Lincoln?"

"It's Lingen—a Nordsky name. My pop was a Nordsky."

I told her that she didn't look Norwegian.

"I know," said Annie. "Irish as Paddy's pig. My mother's name was Hanrahan. Irish on both sides."

Cotton's thoughts fixed on something to eat. "Muddy will fix supper soon as we get to our place."

"Is Muddy your mother?"

"I guess it started when I was little; I couldn't say 'Mother'; just said 'Muddy'. The name hung on, kind of. We just call her Mud or Muddy."

"Father dead?" I wanted to know.

"Yes." I wondered about the death of the elder Goss, but kept my wonderings to myself with everything else I had to keep: my real name; why I was in Pahoka City; why I had climbed upon the blind baggage by prearrangement with the S. C. & W. The sternness and demands of my occupation were upsetting in this moment.

Most of the time I had been a desperately lonely man, and now it seemed pleasing to meet people as appealing and unique as the Goss boys.

I won't tell everything I was thinking about Annie. I repeat: I was young, and there was a physical storm within her, and one could feel it when she was near.

WHILE we were jolting through a gully—a branch of Evening Creek in wetter weather—the crazy notion assailed me that the Goss boys were bandits themselves, that they had guessed who I was, and that they were taking me to this isolated spot to murder me. With similar foolishness I imagined they would seize Annie for foul purposes.

Cotton turned in the dark. "We're home."

We crossed a flat rib of prairie and saw a light from a little house, and a collie dog went bounding after Violet.

I saw machinery: I didn't know what kind, except that it was big and rusty and had a lot of cables. Once out of the buggy, I turned to help Annie down—but Violet was there ahead of me.

He swung her to the ground and started toward the porch, where some one was standing.

"We got company, Muddy," he shouted happily.

Muddy, wholly delighted at the idea, seemed about to clap her hands as she retreated into the house.

In a moment we were all standing inside together. I saw yellow-and-brown plaid oilcloth covering tables and shelves; I saw a table with places laid for three, and a big black range.

But more importantly than these things, I saw the Goss boys' mother. So I remember her now, after forty years, and so I shall always think of her—a short, burly woman, smiling with every bulge of her face.

She spoke in a little-girl voice, explosively, so that we laughed as she leveled her finger at Annie. "Who's that?"

Cotton recited with some gravity, "We met up in Pahoka this afternoon. She had trouble about lodgings, so we fetched her out."

Muddy demanded of Annie: "Whose girl are you? Cotton's or Vi's or"—and her glance floated to me—"or his?"

Annie said, more softly than I might have expected, "I guess I'm nobody's girl. Not right now."

Mrs. Goss cried, "Then you're the girl for me!" and held her for a moment, gray eyes peeking impudently at me over Annie's right shoulder.

"Now, who's that?"

Cotton explained, "Vi got into a little trouble at Cookson's Bar and this stranger helped him out."

"A little trouble!" repeated Violet scornfully. "Charley Tatum was going to cave my head in, that's all."

Mrs. Goss thrust out her palm quickly and shook hands.

"Anybody that fusses with a Tatum is a friend of mine. What's your name, son?"

"Rich Williams."

Mrs. Goss smiled at both Annie and me as if we were too satisfactory to be true. "Now we'll have supper! Cotton, did you fetch my fresh beefsteak?"

"Did I ever forget anything you wanted?" He led the way out, and Violet and I followed him.

Violet had carried a lamp from the house and he held it while Cotton dragged another box—one I hadn't seen before—from under the buggy seat. The box was crammed with groceries. Cotton must have gone shopping before he came to Cookson's Bar.

"How about that other lamp?" I asked them.

"We'll leave it for now. She's so excited about company she hasn't thought about her table lamp; we'll tote it inside after supper."

Vi took the groceries in, and Annie's things, and I joined Cotton at the barn. He had lighted a lantern and was unharnessing the buckskin while Violet's horse stood waiting with docility.

"Rich," he said, "you draw the buggy inside here. I couldn't drive in because things were in the way."

There was a cowshed out beyond somewhere; I smelled and heard the cows. Soon Violet appeared, warning us to hurry. We went up to the house. Water buckets stood on the porch, and we washed. Inside I saw Muddy busy around the stove.

There was plenty of steak with gravy so thick you could cut it with a knife; and we had hot boiled potatoes, and a great dish of stewed tomatoes with sugar and bits of bread in them and now and then an onion.

It all settled into a pleasant dream. This was the most wonderful food in the world. These, I thought, were some of the most wonderful people.

On the floor beside us, the pretty collie sniffed and begged. She was a bitch named Belle, the spoiled darling of the household.

Not yet had I heard her bark; for she knew who was coming when the buggy and horses approached, and she had taken Annie and me on sufferance because we were with the Goss boys. But now she rose up and let go a blast that fairly shattered the ceiling.

Those Goss boys were at the doors in two jumps—Cotton at the front, Violet at the back.

"What is it?" cried Annie.

The first thing I thought of was my own gun. It was in my bundle on the old green sofa. Without saying anything I got out gun and holster.

Cot opened the door and I followed him out.

"Somebody prowling around here?" I asked casually.

"I don't know."

Violet came around the house from the rear.

THEN faintly we could hear it: the sound of horses at a considerable distance from us.

Cotton ordered: "Vi, you stay close to hand, while I take Quanah and slip across the creek."

"You stay, and I'll take Tony," Violet retorted.

He ran to the barn on his toes, his limber boots muffling the sound of his haste. We listened for hoofbeats, and soon they came, passing rapidly down a slope behind the barn.

Cotton cleared his throat. "I didn't know you had a gun in your bundle, Rich."

"I couldn't help putting it on, Cotton. The dog barked and right away you fellows were up and at the doors. I figured maybe you were in trouble."

"Well," said Cotton, "after that row at Cookson's this afternoon I don't much blame you. But you're wrong. We're not in the least bit of trouble. Only we got strangers traveling our land sometimes."

At that moment Belle barked and ran toward us. Then among scrub willows that lined the lane there was a muddle of sound. Cotton yelled at the dog and his left hand swept his coat aside. Two shots banged down in the willows. Then came a whole tangle of shots biting back and forth in a spasm of flashes. Cot started along the road, and I went with him. The next moment I sprawled flat; my revolver flew—the gun which I had drawn automatically when the shooting started.

A horse passed with a rush, and Violet called his brother's name. I got up in time to see a dark specter come along the lane. It was Cotton.

"What in hell happened?" I demanded.

"I don't know. Where's Vi?"

"Over there by the yard. He's having horse trouble."

I picked up my gun and followed the Goss boys into their dooryard.

Annie was petrified with fear and astonishment. But Mrs. Goss had brought out a gun of some kind—either a rifle or a shotgun—for now I saw her take it back into the house, as soon as she saw we were safe.

Cotton and I tagged along while Violet led Tony to the stable and gave him a nubbin of corn to chew.

"Well?" asked Cotton.

Every suspicion which I had felt about the Goss boys was now revived, and so was my perplexity at their calmness. Violet didn't act like a man who had just been attacked murderously by prowlers on his farm.

"Couldn't see much to shoot at." He seemed to be explaining a casual episode. "Two men riding blacks or chestnuts. But I heard something yelp as I was shooting. I reckon they're halfway back to Pahoka by now." He started cheerily toward the house.

I asked, "How does he know they were from Pahoka?"

"He doesn't; he's just guessing," said Cotton.

He put his hand on my sleeve. "Wait a minute. I want to show you something. Know what this is?"

"No."

"It's a well-digging apparatus."

"Do you dig wells?"

"Used to. My father and I dug wells before we made the Run; and Violet helped as he grew up." He continued, "Mister, with this well-digging machinery that we got, the rumor has spread that there is gold on this land. Maybe that's the reason people are riding around here these days. Maybe they're coming under cover of night

to hunt for the gold mine that we Goss boys have got."

This was reasonable enough on the face of it, but somehow it didn't explain all the powder that had been burned in that nearby willow thicket.

Cotton whistled a pleasant Amen to his explanation. "Now we'll go in and play some jacks."

"Blackjack?"

"No. Vi's had enough blackjack to last him for one day. It's just a little childish game that Muddy loves, and she certainly plays the hell out of it."

When Cotton and I reached the house, Violet was sitting at the kitchen table, running a rod through his revolver and wiping the gun with an oily rag.

Annie was wide-eyed at this display of artillery. "This isn't a bit like St. Louis," she said.

Cotton sat admiring her hair. "Want to go back to St. Louis right now?" he asked.

"No! Oh, no. I like you all too much."

"Sure you like us?" I asked her.

"I love Muddy and I think you are the nicest men I ever knew. I guess I love all three of you, too."

Annie kept talking about the prowlers as "burglars." But Muddy referred to them as Forty-niners, which was appropriate enough if you believed that the riders had come searching for gold. However, I locked my doubts up and put them away, and lost myself in the joy of admiring Annie.

Cotton got out a pipe and sat smoking, with his boots resting on a spare kitchen chair. He too watched Annie with satisfaction. Violet put away his cleaning apparatus and watched her too.

It was a pleasant thing to do: to caress the girl's trim shoulders and rounded hips with your eyes, as she went from shelf to sink, humming all the time.

Muddy pricked up her round little ears. "What's that tune? Old Dog Tray?"

"Pop used to sing it." There sounded a quiver in

Annie's voice. "Pop sang it. That kind of song makes you want to cry, but it's—the kind of crying you take joy in—"

"Old Dog Tray's ever faithful:
Grief cannot drive him away . . .
He is gentle, he is kind, I'll never, never find
A better friend than Old Dog Tray."

Annie sang, and her voice was a thing as beautiful as herself; only we all felt sadness in the song that was bringing such tears to her eyes.

Violet pulled aside a curtain beneath the sink, disclosing an array of bottles and jugs. He selected a jug and held it before him, still watching Annie.

The room became silent except for Annie's sobbing.

"For the Lord's sake!" exclaimed Violet.

Muddy put her hand on Annie's waist; then she shrugged helplessly, as if she didn't know quite what to do.

Thereupon Cotton arose and walked to the corner. He slid both of his arms around Annie. She put her face below his neck, and finally grew more quiet.

"Want a drink?" asked Cotton.

"Yes," Annie whispered.

"This is rye," said Violet warningly.

Annie Lingen strangled over her glass, though she didn't take much. But Muddy poured out half a tumbler, neat, and drank it like cider.

"Vi," she ordered, "screw down that wall lamp. It's a-smoking—enough to fetch tears to anybody's eyes."

Violet obeyed her; then turned around and laughed; and I knew what he was thinking.

Vi and I went out through darkness to the barn. We got the box out and carried it to the house. I can see the glory of that lamp before me still; an immense shade of frosted glass, with gilt and red ribbons.

"Blow out all the lights in the house," Violet commanded through the door, when we had put a match to this one. Then in triumph the Goss boys carried the gift to their mother. Muddy squealed again and again.

Then we all had a drink and began to play jacks—old-fashioned jackstraws. When we tired of it, Violet got out another game; tiddlywinks, of all things.

"Yes, Vi," said Muddy. "Old Santy brought those 'winks to you when you was ten or twelve. And that was all he brought. Those were mighty lean years."

Annie Lingen cried, "Lean years aren't any fun."

Violet's roving eyes were suddenly steady. "Why don't you stay with us a spell, and then you won't have any more lean years?"

"It's a good idea," said Annie.

She slept that night in Muddy's room. The boys' room was behind; those were all the rooms they had.

"I'm going to give my bed to you," Violet told me. "Ours are single cot beds, so we can't share and share."

"The sofa is good enough for me," I insisted.

We argued about it and at last I had my way.

I tried to sleep but couldn't. At last I thought of the barn. Sock-footed, I walked to it, remembering which mow held hay and which held straw. It was straw for me; I had tried hay before.

As long as I couldn't sleep, I tried to discipline my thoughts—to keep them away from the girl and to wonder about the Gosses and their manner of living.

Gold on their land, a voice cried from the boundaries of slumber, and so I went off hunting gold. My dreams were concerned with Mr. Barrow the photographer, and with a ghostly father of Annie Lingen's who wore a pillowcase over his wicked face, with eyeholes cut out, like the bandits who robbed the S. C. & W.

This dream was frenzied enough to awaken me, and now the Oklahoma sky was a frenzy, too. I crawled across to a pigeonhole where I might see the miracle of such a sunrise.

The boys came into the barn, but I pretended to be asleep, because I wanted to see where they were going.

They turned the horses out and I heard them saddling two of them. As they rode away, I watched them moving toward the scene of the night's shooting.

I tried to reason things out. Thus far I actually had no more right to suspicion than I had had the previous night. Even if they were not involved in something peculiar, it would have been natural to investigate. Somebody, after all, had been on their land—and had shot to kill, too.

I climbed out of the mow, and noticed that beyond the rear door of the barn Evening Creek flowed shallow and inviting. There, screened by willows, I had a good bath, and no one saw me except Quanah and Tony.

Three cows hadn't been milked, and I went up to the house for milk pails. Muddy met me, and I had to argue with her before she would let me milk. She wanted to treat me like an honored guest or something.

When I brought the milk back to the house, Annie Lingen was up and dressed. She was something to take your breath away, out there on the prairie on that yellow-and-blue September morning.

Breakfast was salt pork and fried eggs—plenty of them. Nothing ever tasted better. As I ate, I kept wondering about the boys, and Annie kept lamenting their departure.

Muddy talked about the family. The father's name was George Goss, and he had ridden with Mosby in Virginia. Then, after the war, he had drifted to Arkansas, where he met Muddy.

Cottonwood was now twenty-nine and Violet twenty-five.

She said, "I have knowed people who named their children after fighting generals and characters of the past.

Reckon I had the right to name my own boys after God's growing things and not be plagued for it."

By the time the Cherokee Strip was opened the Gosses made the Run, and loved to tell about it. But George Goss was shot and killed that same year. There was something unspeakable about his death.

"If the Yankees hadn't shot him in the arm, he would have been able to get his gun out in time, when he had that trouble eight years ago. His arm was stiff on account of those Yankees."

This was where the narrative stopped, and it was Annie who stopped it: she became too inquisitive. She wanted to know just who had shot George Goss, and why. Muddy's untrammeled eyes flicked past her. She started up with a cry—she smelled something burning. Muddy didn't want to talk any more; that was that.

By ten o'clock Cotton and Violet were not in, though Muddy seemed in no way alarmed. "They'll come. I promised Vi two chickens for the five of us."

I volunteered to kill the chickens, and from the porch steps Mrs. Goss pointed out two that I should take. Half an hour later I got the shock of my life. Annie was making stuffing while Mrs. Goss worked with the chickens. She wanted to stitch the carcasses.

"Rich," Muddy said, "you find me some cotton string. Our hands are greasy."

"Where?"

"In the draw." She pointed to the bottom drawer of a chest which stood against the wall between those doors leading to the two bedrooms. Muddy said she kept her sewing in that bureau.

I saw the string and took it out. I had to hunt for the big needle—there were shirts to be mended, socks that needed darning, things like that. When I raked these articles aside I saw little white scraps, in shape elliptical, two or three inches long. They were funny scraps to find anywhere.

A child might have made them. On the other hand, if you were going to take some pillowcases and cut eyeholes in them, you would have such wafers of cloth left.

Belle began to yelp; Cotton and Vi were riding into the yard. Annie ran toward the door. I took advantage of the moment to stuff a couple of the scraps into my pocket.

"Hurry, Rich," said Mrs. Goss. "Can't you find that needle?"

"I found it," I said.

COTTON and Vi looked pleased with themselves. They seemed possessed of a secret, and I saw Muddy trying to figure it out. But she wasn't going to ask questions. She only popped her chickens into the oven.

Violet's shirt stuck out as if he were carrying something inside. He went to the bedroom, and when he reappeared his chest was flat again.

The finding of those linen fragments had so disconcerted me that for the moment I forgot about Annie. Little lozenge-shaped scraps of sheeting. . . There was nothing to do but stay on with the Gosses and Annie and work the matter out for myself.

I found Cotton splitting oak at the woodpile.

"Blood on the ax," said Cotton. "Who killed those chickens—you?"

I nodded. "I suppose there was a lot more I could have done. I milked the cows."

"Told you there wasn't much farm work, didn't I?"

"Yes, but it seems I should do more."

Cotton smiled. "Don't worry about it. We're well fixed these days. Can you keep a secret?"

I didn't wish him to begin any revelation which he would feel obliged to terminate abruptly. I took a deep breath. "Let's get this stove wood in the kitchen; then we'll come outside where we can talk."

Annie was preparing dough for pies. Violet winked as we came in, and moved up behind Annie, bent as she was bending, his arms spread wide outside of hers.

"Pies," said Violet, "ought to be made like this—"

Annie ducked under his arms. She cried, "You're the freshest thing around here! Why, Rich was around here all morning, and he didn't even offer to hold my little finger. But I guess he's afraid of me."

Cotton grinned at me. "Now that the shooting's over, Rich, how about a little target practice?"

"Cot and me," announced Violet, "we try to keep in trim. Get your gun."

I brought my revolver and belt. "I haven't got many shells," I said. "Just the ones in this belt."

"What is your gun?"

"A .45. A Bisley model Colt."

"You better go slow until we can visit town and buy you some shells."

Muddy warned us not to forget about dinner, and the boys said they would just go to the dump.

Vi and I started shooting first, for a quarter.

We each picked a can and fired five shots, aimed fire. Violet hit his can twice, but I hit mine five times.

Violet gave me the quarter. "Now go ahead, Cotton."

Cotton dropped his left hand suddenly. The midget holster turned, and his .44 began to pound. He fired double-action, of course, and as rapidly as he could pull the trigger. He put four shots through the big tobacco can.

Well, I had read and heard my share of tales about fancy-shooting gunmen, but his was the very finest hip shooting I had ever seen.

"Cot," said Vi, "if this can is Brew Tatum, he's deader than hell."

His brother came forward. "Well, Rich," he said, "that's it!"

I said, "It's damn good shooting. Just what do you mean—'that's it'?"

"Brew Tatum. Charley Tatum's brother."

"I've got his hat," said Violet.

I said, "So that's what was giving you such a bosom? Where did you pick it up?"

Violet pointed. "Where all that smoke was last night. That hat was just laying there this morning."

Violet went to the house and got the hat. It bore the stamped gilt initials *B. T.*

"Yes," said Cotton. "We rode early, and first thing Violet spies is that hat in the weeds."

Cotton went on: "We followed their trail across the road and south a couple miles—they were galloping mostly. It went to Brew's land."

Violet said dreamily, "Section Twenty-four, Township Twenty-one."

"Yes," Cotton said. "Damn Section Twenty-four."

He spoke with such ferocity I was baffled. "Why?"

"That's where we lost our pappy. Has Muddy told you anything about that?"

"Just that he was shot."

"He was shot right after we made the Run. I showed you our well-digging apparatus. Well, there were claims on the land around here, and a lot of trouble about settling some of them. Violet was seventeen, so he couldn't file on the land. I was twenty-one, so pappy and I filed on all we could afford. We needed money the worst way, and then pappy got a chance to dig a well up on Section Twenty-four. Brew Tatum claimed that section. But a man named Wingate said it was his and he would pay us to bring in water for him. Soon we needed our other machine; we had broke a cogwheel. Pappy stayed by the well, and Vi and I took the team down here to bring up the other drill."

Violet said, "It was past noon before we got back."

"Yes," Cotton related. "Pappy had been laying there for hours, but he wasn't dead yet. He said that two of Tatum's men rode up and started to bullyrag him. They called him a name, and he went for his gun. They shot the hell out of him, but he didn't die until a few minutes before we reached home."

Violet indicated high ground across Evening Creek. "Buried there."

"Vi and I rode to the Tatum place," Cotton said. "Brew wasn't there, and the two men that pappy had described had gone to Pahoka City. We came on those two in the barbershop. I tried to pull my gun, but it stuck. The fellow who wasn't yet being shaved—he shot me through the right shoulder; but Vi had his gun out, and he killed that fellow, and killed the other one when he got up all foamy trying to reach his pistol."

Vi said, "That's why Cot shoots the way he does. He swore he'd never draw gun from holster again."

I wanted to know, "Did you go after Brew Tatum, too?"

"A man in the barbershop said that Brew was eating supper in the hotel. We didn't want to shoot him there, and he just sat at that table and cried. He said he didn't have anything to do with pappy being shot. He said those men acted without orders. So we went outside, and then they arrested us."

"But you weren't sentenced?"

Cotton explained: "They could never get a jury to agree about Violet. Finally it was dismissed. They never did arrest me, except that first night for a while."

We went up to the house, the boys joshing with Annie. I had plenty of notions to occupy me.

The Gosses didn't like the Tatums, and the Tatums hated the Gosses, and it looked as if I had become a Goss, for better or for worse.

I didn't like to think about those clipped-out pieces of cloth in my shirt pocket. Now, more than ever, I wished I hadn't opened the drawer.

TWO or three hours after dinner, Annie wanted to go riding. She said that she had scarcely ever been on a horse and thought it would be fun.

Let Cotton and Vi take her riding, I thought jealously. But that wasn't the reason I refused to go. My false position in this life at the Gosses'—the pose and

character which necessarily I had assumed—preyed upon me. I felt, in some curious fashion, that I was actually a penniless wanderer who had been taken in by these people and given food and shelter.

If this were not true in fact, it was true in practice and in theory. Also I recognized early that other truth, of which the boys themselves were becoming gradually aware: we were bound to be rivals for Annie.

"Rich, you better come," Cotton yelled at me.

I told them I was too lazy, so they rode away.

"You better think twice," said Muddy.

"I've thought," I told her.

So I had—about a lot of things, including those telltale pieces of material in my pocket.

She said she hated to be idle. "Rich, fetch me my sewing box, if you want to help an old lady. It's in the bottom draw where you got the needle."

I carried the drawer out to the porch.

"Rich, don't you kind of figure the wind is like a fiddle sometimes? Listen, now, and see if it ain't."

I turned my head, trying to please Muddy.

It came on, thin breeze folding over, until it passed our ears and sighed into the east.

"A phonograph!" Mrs. Goss cried.

"A what?"

"A gramophone thing—you know, with a crank and horn and all kinds of cylinders to play. That's what I'll have the boys purchase for me!"

"Look here," I said gruffly. "I can't figure it."

"Can't figure what?"

"This money business, Muddy. It's got me worried. I don't see how you can do it."

"Do what? Buy a phonograph?"

"They cost up to a hundred and fifty dollars," I said.

Muddy sat stitching. Sometimes she would grub in the drawer, but if she missed the scraps she gave no sign.

"Rich, it's thoughtful of you to fret about us, but we got plenty. I wonder if the boys ever suggested to you—when you've been talking together—there might be money on our land."

"They did say something about a gold mine, but they talked as if it was a foolish notion."

Muddy hung the mended shirt on the back of her chair and then set her gaze firmly upon me.

She cried, "I reckon I've got to the bottom of this now! You were reluctant to go a-riding with Annie and the boys because you felt like a pauper. Well, money comes sudden on occasion." She sighed.

"Take my man George. One day he and the other Rangers went out with Mosby, and they wrecked them a Yankee train in Virginia. George got about two thousand dollars; and he had been as poor as Job's turkey before. You can't tell—maybe a train might get halted around here some place. Who knows?"

I shook my head and walked off the porch.

"You stick close to us, Rich. We'll use you better than the world may have done heretofore."

She yawned and said she wished she had that phonograph. "Marches: I like those best. See that horse, Rich?" and she pointed to Quanah, scratching his neck on the top rail of the fence.

"Yes, I see him."

"Now, you get Violet's saddle and put it on Quanah! You ought to be out with those boys and that pretty Annie, a-having fun. You go a-riding. I don't want to see this sadness in your face no longer."

PERHAPS I had ridden thirty rods beyond a weedy summit when Quanah jerked his head and whinnied. I stopped the horse and listened. "The others," I thought. Instinctively I headed to the south.

Quanah stepped over a little stream. I surveyed the gorge, expecting to see three buckskin horses and their riders. Instead, some distance away a man was prowling down the course of the stream.

I pulled out my gun and yelled, "Stop!"

He went scrambling on. I fired once, and promptly the man landed in a pile.

My first feeling was of shame.

"Mr. Barrow," I cried, "I didn't know that was you!"

"You give me a turn," he stammered, "But I had it coming! I shouldn't have come poaching. It would serve me right if the Goss boys blasted my carcass."

"Poaching?" I echoed.

He muttered, "They say confession is good for the soul. Well, I was searching for some of that gold."

"I don't believe there is any gold hereabouts."

He blinked through dirty spectacles.

"Mr. Williams," he said suddenly, "I got a favor to ask of you. Don't tell the Goss boys that you come across me here."

"What difference would it make?"

"Might make a lot to them. To you and me maybe."

He whispered hoarsely, "Mr. Williams, I'll split with you fifty-fifty. You're honest; you impressed me that way when I met you; but I have reason to think that you're now associating with wicked people."

"They've been good people to me."

"Robbers! Robbers—do you understand? I have reason to think they are! There's a reward, folks say. Five hundred dollars; maybe more than that. I've got evidence," he gasped. "Those fellows robbed the S. C. & W. Maybe I didn't tell you, but they had to blow a lock box to get the money, and they blew up some of the money too. Folks found it, all burnt and frayed. Well, last night—"

He began to cough with excitement.

"There was a bill," whispered Mr. Barrow.

"What kind of a bill?"

"Greenback—five dollars. Violet gave it to Ole Flugstad when he purchased something, and Ole bought some medicine from me last night. I told you I sold medicines?"

I prompted, "Ole gave you a five-dollar bill—"

"Yes, yes," Barrow cried. "It was frayed on one end and had marks on it—powder burns, dynamite burns! He said Violet give him the bill."

He had kept the greenback; he said he didn't even use it to buy whisky, though he was sorely tempted.

At last I got the old man headed toward Pahoka City.

BARROW had stumbled upon something, perhaps; but as for real evidence, it was laughable—as far from that as the bits of cloth I had found, or my own suspicions. Yet I must admit now that unexpectedly I found myself associated with men who might prove to be two of the three criminals I had been ordered to run down.

Barrow, it was plain, had hoped to play a lone hand and rake in the reward himself, until I interrupted his game and he felt compelled to deal me in.

So of course I had promised to appear in town to examine the greenback, but warned Barrow to say nothing to any one, on pain of my informing the Gosses and giving them a chance to leave the country.

The dusty wind cried around me as I reached the prairie. It cried that my connivance with Barrow was as duplicit as the fondness and gratitude which so readily I displayed to the family who had sheltered me. My spirit gave its answer: this was not true; already I had acquired an admiration for these people, and no future circumstance would alter my feeling for them.

Trotting through breeze-torn grass, the Goss boys and Annie Lingen approached.

Annie watched me with full lips smiling. "I want you to take me for a ride, Rich," she declared.

"Come on." I swung Quanah toward the north. Annie broke away and tried to gallop alongside me. She joggled and squealed, gripping the horn with one hand. Cotton and Vi laughed at this, shouting instructions at Annie until we rode out of earshot.

Annie Lingen crowded up her mare and grasped my rein.

"Talk to you a minute, Rich."

Her face reddened. "I liked you at first. But how can you steal from folks who've been kind to you?"

"Annie, I've never stolen a nickel from any one! What on earth do you mean?"

Her voice rose. "I saw you—take something—out of that—drawer!"

"Have you mentioned it to the boys?"

She shook her head. "No; I wanted to talk to you first, alone."

I showed her the little pieces of linen.

(Continued on page 41)

HOW'S IT GOING, YANK?

The human side of our flyers' first year in Britain—how our boys work, live, play, and get along with the natives

BY LT. ARTHUR GORDON

Homelike! So Sergeant Jim Mason of Dublin, Georgia, has finally found England's East Grimstead. With him are a local resident and a Land Army girl from London.

IT'S more than a year now since the advance guard of the Eighth Army Air Force came to Britain. A long year. Villagers no longer gather to stare at the men with the white star and yellow wings on their shoulder patches. Nobody bothers to gape any more when a jeep goes hurtling by. In London the rakish crumpled caps of Air Force officers are too commonplace to notice.

The first year is over. What has it proved? What has it added up to for these Americans?

What it has added up to depends on whom you ask. If you ask the Commanding General of the Eighth Air Force, he will tell you that it has been a year of preparation on an unprecedented scale, a year of trial and error, a year of promise whose fulfillment has at last begun.

If you ask a staff officer—and there are some who have risen from lieutenants to colonels in these twelve months—you will hear enthusiastic accounts of co-operation from the R. A. F., of endless difficulties solved, obstinate bottlenecks broken; of devastating raids yet to come.

If you ask the pilot of a Fortress or a Liberator, his eyes will light up as he describes the baptism of fire through which he and his crew have passed. He will tell you incredible tales of heroism five miles up in the thin blue air over Germany, where the value of daylight precision bombing has been proved by a pathetically small handful of steel-nerved pioneers. He will assure you, now that the big ships are arriving in quantity, that a crushing offensive against industrial Germany and against the Luftwaffe itself is a mathematical certainty.

But the man who could tell you most is the man who will probably tell you least. He is not in the habit of talking for the record. You may meet him anywhere in England—muddy and disheveled on an operational station or neat and jaunty on a London street corner. He'll probably be a tall sergeant with a long, serious American face, chewing his gum reflectively in the pale English sunshine. He might be only a corporal—or even a private first class.

Go up to him and ask him how it's going, what he's been doing with his year in Britain, and he'll favor you with a surprised stare. Then, probably, he'll frown and glance down at his shoes, wondering how you can expect him to tell you what it's been like from the beginning:

That long, seasick voyage a year ago, packed into the crowded transport like sardines, living in dirty-white Mae Wests, fed on two meals a day and endless rumors: "Say, didja hear a sub chased us all last night?" . . . "I got it straight, we're heading for India." . . . "Fact is, they yanked two German spies off this boat just before we sailed."

Three weeks of boredom and occasional retching, then the welcome sight of land. But how different from the flat, empty plains of Kansas! English pubs and American movies. Strong tobacco and weak beer. Red Cross clubs with energetic hostesses, and Saturday-night dances where English girls aren't as slow on their feet as you'd been led to expect.

A week or so at a replacement center, getting used to the English accents, getting resigned to the English climate, wondering when you're going to get some action.

And finally, a bomber station. A desolate treeless expanse under a weeping June sky. June should be sunny and warm. Last year it wasn't. It rained. It was cold. There was mud. Mud on your boots, in your clothes, in your hair. Napoleon called it the fifth element: earth, air, fire, water—and mud. He was right.

Work now, and plenty of it. Living in Nissen huts, dispersed for security reasons all over God's creation. Walking hundreds of miles a day. Coal stoves—cold comfort. Food not too good at first. Supplies not really adequate. *Cold, wet*—"Jeez, don't they have no summer in this place?" Jeeps and no drivers for them, or maybe drivers and no jeeps. "Say, I hear the old 00th drew a permanent R. A. F. station. Yeah, real buildings, *hot 'n' cold water—no foolin'*." British civilian workers building runways, building control towers—always preparation, never any action. "Hey, d'ya think we'll ever bomb anybody from this dump?"

Then July 4. American planes over enemy-held Europe. At last! A small beginning, but it's begun.

The Fortresses begin to arrive.

(*Continued on page 67*)

A MILLION KIDS TAKE PEN IN HAND

Children crowded KFSD's studio on Jack Armstrong Day in San Diego to enlist in the Write-A-Fighter Corps.

PATRIOTS WITHOUT UNIFORM

An outstanding juvenile character of radio lines up his followers to relieve the mail-from-home hunger of our armed forces

BY MARTHA OSTENSO

JACK ARMSTRONG

UPON her return to America after four and a half months in the North Africa war theater, Martha Raye, of motion-picture fame, declared, "The troops' only complaint was that they didn't get enough letters from home. That's what they want most." If letters from home are what our fighting men want, 1,200,000 American kids are going to see that they get them!

A few months ago Jack Armstrong, the redoubtable All-American Boy, who may be heard on your Blue Network station any week-day afternoon, organized the Write-A-Fighter Corps. At present it boasts a membership of more than 1,200,000 boys and girls between the ages of six and sixteen. The Corps has grown with a snowball-downhill impressiveness, and ranges from coast to coast and border to border.

Each squadron in the Corps has its leader, a boy or girl who recruits [illegible] and directs their activities. Every pilot of the squadron is solemnly pledged to write at least one letter a month to a friend or relative in our armed forces. It has been strictly stipulated that only relatives and friends may be the recipients of letters—for an obvious reason: the mails must not be crowded with well-meaning but pointless correspondence.

Do the fighting men enjoy the kids' letters? One soldier writes, "I hear regularly from Squadron 16099 and enjoy the letters and cartoons very much. One of the biggest moments in a soldier's day comes with 'mail call,' and to receive a letter from the WAFC brings a special kick, for any serviceman knows it to be something a little extra just for him." And here's one from somewhere in England: "Your letters were water-soaked, but I could still read them. . . . You talked as though I were your own brother, and that warmed my heart almost to tears. Did you think that soldiers never cried? Well, they do. They do not shed tears when they cry. They cry way down inside. . . . They do not cry when they are wounded. A soldier in the A. E. F. cries silently when he thinks of his home, his mother, or his family. So when Johnny Doughboy gets a letter from friends, you can bet he is happy again. Thanks a million!"

And this letter to a WAFC leader from somewhere in the swamps of New Guinea: "You tell me, Jimmy, that the marble season has opened, and your gang is playing baseball in that vacant lot behind the lumber yard where my gang used to play a few years ago. It's for the sake of those things, little brother, that we are fighting this war. And gosh, did your letter make me smell the lilacs back home!" The youngsters' efforts are amply repaid.

But the WAFC has not restricted its activities to letter-writing. The squadrons vie with one another in collecting scrap metal, rubber, and fats. Squadron 66699, of Cleveland, Ohio, listens jubilantly to the radio

report of its thousands of pounds of tin-can salvage. A squadron in Mount Horeb, Wisconsin, hears the broadcast and sets about furiously to do as well or better. A nine-year-old boy proudly reports, "Our squadron has collected a great big *pill* of iron to defeet our ennemies." A young lady in the third grade writes that her squadron is garnering worn-out rayon "hoes." From Altoona, Iowa, a leader sends word that "Our WAFC squadron has just finished their stamp and bond drive, which lasted nine weeks and three days. We have collected $9,316.55 for the U. S. Government, and are very proud. We set our goal at $2,000." A letter from Darien, Connecticut, modestly states, "We are buying stamps and War Bonds. And our squadron is giving money to the Connecticut Society for Crippled Children. We hope we are doing well." A Yonkers squadron has sold $3,000 in War Stamps and has its own Victory Chicken Coop and Victory Garden. From Minneapolis: "We canvassed 20 blocks collecting phonographs and records. This week we are going out to collect radios for men in the service." From a town on the Pacific Coast: "We are collecting novelty jewelry for our soldiers to trade with the natives in Africa and elsewhere for labor and assistance." A squadron in Hinsdale, New York, has collected "460 pairs of silk sox."

And so it goes! The letters to Jack Armstrong are so full of pathos and unconscious humor and patriotic zeal that a volume deserves to be published as a cross section of Young America—a Young America from which we war-harassed grown-ups should take heart. The solons of our government could do worse than cast an eye over the unity implicit in this children's crusade.

And how do the grown-ups in this country take to the idea? Mrs. Ruth Bill, teacher in Fort Wayne, Indiana, writes, "Never before have I had such sincere interest and enthusiasm shown in English composition classes. All my fifth- and sixth-grade pupils are writing—77 of them—to boys all over the United States and in several foreign countries. We have received 150 replies."

The Rev. John P. Devane of Monticello, Florida, after stressing the "incalculable good the Write-A-Fighter Corps would mean to the men of our fighting forces," adds that "its advantages to the children themselves would be no less serviceable."

WHAT it means to parents is expressed in a long letter from the mother of a squadron leader in Redwood City, California. The letter is worthy of being quoted in full, but a few of its salient points must suffice here. Barbara, the squadron leader, has a heart ailment, but she inspires her "fighter pilots" to convert scrap-collection money to supplies for Canteen and Red Cross Hospital Units and for aid to China. By special dispensation, Barbara was permitted to enlarge her original squadron to ten members. The girls make baby clothes for the Red Cross, while the boys work on sewing kits for the soldiers. The squadron prepared ten scrapbooks for the U. S. O. to help San Mateo County reach its quota of 1,000. Watches and clocks were collected for Russia, as well as 240 salable and usable items in household supplies for Russian Relief. Books, playing cards, games for the soldiers, toys for the Children's Hospital—what a harvest!

Parents, educators, church leaders have endorsed this project and it has received the approval of such men as Colonel E. M. Kirby, Chief of the Radio Branch of the U. S. Army, public relations division; and Roane Waring, Commander of the American Legion.

The appalling increase in juvenile delinquency in the United States since we entered the war has caused the gravest concern to pulpit and press and judicial bench. Hard-working, respectable parents have been heartbroken when the insidious contagion of adolescent wrongdoing has invaded their homes. Community centers, with simple psychiatry, are prescribing the *healthy hobby* as an antitoxin to this plague bred of war hysteria.

Jack Armstrong's young army began marching as soon as it was given its objective—one letter a month to a friend or relative in the military services. As might be expected of young Americans, the immediate objective has been reached and passed. Many of them are writing four or five letters a month instead of the one for which they were pledged, and have plenty of time to devote to the sturdier tasks they have set themselves. If the entire rest of the home front were in the hands of adults as eager and energetic as these American kids, there would be no cause for a moment's doubt as to the outcome of this world struggle.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commander in Chief of the Allied Forces in Africa, wrote to a St. Louis schoolboy: "I am sure that, in writing regularly to soldiers in the service, you and your schoolmates are doing a very fine thing and one which you may be sure is definitely contributing toward the winning of the war."

THE END

Max Parrish of Fort Wayne, Indiana, shows Bonnie Schemehorn where our fighters may be in Africa. Both belong to the WAFC.

STALK THE

Kit lost her foothold. She felt Dan reach out for her as she went past.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

KIT GRUENHOLZ, a Czech refugee, thought she had found peace, until she discovered that Paul Campbell, art expert who worked at the New York museum where she too had a job, was a Nazi agent. Paul, using as a club his knowledge that Kit was in the country on a forged passport, demanded that she betray her anti-Nazi friends. Desperate, she tried to kill him, but shot another man instead. This gave Paul a stronger hold over her—he could denounce her to the police as a murderess any time he chose to produce the body, which he had hidden.

By losing her head at a crucial moment, Kit unwittingly led Paul's henchmen to Anna Mahler, an organizer of the underground in Europe who was now in America. Because of her carelessness, her friends in the anti-Nazi movement refused to have anything to do with her. Her one thought now was to trap Paul and to rescue Anna if the old woman still lived. She turned for help to Dan Shay, a young chemist who was in love with her.

Dan and Kit were tricked into going to Paul's house on Long Island, where he had an odd assortment of guests—foreigners whose allegiance was sold to the highest bidder. Kit hoped to be able to search the place for Anna, but Paul watched her every move.

The surface politeness which had been maintained came to an end in the afternoon, when Paul, angered at something Dan said, knocked him down, then kicked and beat him, aided by the other men. Kit had a gun in her bag and managed to rescue Dan, and she and he drove off in one of Paul's cars. They were followed, and Kit, trying to shake off the pursuers, drove into some sand dunes near Montauk. The car stuck, and she and Dan got out and hid in the dunes. They were about to return to the automobile when a shot rang out. Paul's men were on the job! It was only then that Kit remembered she had left her bag in the car.

"They know where we are now," she said. "And they know they've got our only gun."

THEN they heard another shot from the same direction, but this time the bullet came nowhere near them. Kit and Dan looked at each other for answer.

"They couldn't have seen me that time," Dan insisted. "But it was the same gun!"

HUNTER

Kit and Dan seek help desperately, but refuge turns out to be betrayal and always ahead lie fresh dangers

BY MITCHELL WILSON

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK BENSING

There was another shot, but more distant than before. Dan peered cautiously through the grass, and Kit saw a small smile on his face.

"I see them now. They're walking away from us."

Kit crawled up alongside of him. Perhaps a quarter of a mile away she saw three figures, widely separated, but converging toward one dune.

"They didn't see you, then," Kit reasoned. "They must have been shooting at anything that looked suspicious, and that dune seemed more so than this."

EVERY so often one or another of the three would disappear from sight behind a dune, and as long as the figure was hidden Kit felt a small tightening in her throat. She could be satisfied that she was comparatively safe only when she knew what every one of them was doing. Now they were almost together. Watching the stealth with which they climbed the last obstacle, she was as terrified as though she had been in that crater over there. She could see them wave one another on, and then, at a signal, all three jumped to their feet at the crest. As they did so, three faint shots just missed being simultaneous. Then the figures stopped, and Kit could see the heads turn to one another. Their arms made little angry gestures, and one of the men pointed away to the north.

"It'll be dark in fifteen minutes," Dan murmured. "If they don't spot us by then, we'll be all right."

"Be careful," Kit warned him. "You don't know where the women are. Remember, there'll be a moon tonight."

"But not until fairly late."

The three men broke up again. One went east directly away from them; one north, away from the shore; and the third started west in Kit's and Dan's general direction, but on a line between them and the shore. Dusk was settling in very fast now. Dan seemed about to move away, but she detained him.

"Don't, Dan," she said. "I'd rather have you close to me."

"You didn't say that last night," he reminded her. "You were rather cold-blooded about my being in love with you."

"I suppose I was," she admitted. "Tonight it's different. We're much closer, somehow. It's as though you're one of *us* now. You know what I'm talking about, and I saw you learning."

"I learned," he agreed bitterly. "I learned a beautiful lesson."

"And when I saw them beating you," Kit went on, "what I was feeling was far more than sympathy or pity for a friend."

Kit shifted her position slightly and looked at him. She put an arm around his neck and pressed her face against his.

"I'm in love with you, Dan, I suppose. I must love you very much."

He raised his head in surprise, in almost heartbreaking incredulity. His lips moved as though he were on the point of speaking. Then he kissed her. All the loneliness of years, the terror, fright, and exhaustion, disappeared for her. To be with him, pressed against him, was relief beyond expectation.

She rested her forehead against his cheek and held him very tightly.

"Kit," he whispered, "why can't we go away? Nobody'll find us. We can't go back now. God knows what they'll do to you!"

She moved away from him slowly. The idea of freedom was tantalizing and wonderful. But there was something unreal about it, and the unreality was in the fact that this wouldn't be what she knew as freedom. There was no freedom in two people being by themselves, away from the world. To be free meant that one was able to live with the world. Kit had been taught the real meaning of the word by the Anna Mahlers, the Conrad Kreutzers, the Czech students.

"It would mean surrender, wouldn't it? Surrender to Paul and his crowd. They'd go free. Could you see yourself doing that?"

"No," Dan admitted. "I might have been able to do it yesterday, but not today. No—not even yesterday. You couldn't either, could you?"

"No," Kit said slowly, "I couldn't."

They sat in the silent dusk. Overhead the clouds were dark blue against a sky that was scarcely lighter. Dan crawled away, and peered over the crest of the dune again for several minutes without moving.

"Do you see anything?" Kit asked.

He shook his head. "No. It's so dark now that it's hard to see more than a little distance." He waited until Kit came up alongside of him. "Let's get going," he said. "If we keep low, we stand a good chance of making it. I haven't seen one of them since I've been up here."

"It doesn't seem wise," Kit answered slowly. "Shouldn't we wait until we're sure they've gone?"

Dan shook his head. "All they have to do is spot us, and we're cooked. We don't have a gun to defend ourselves. If we can get out of this section while we have a chance, I might be able to get to a telephone and report. Did you notice how far away the nearest town is?"

"It's Amagansett, a few miles back along the highway."

He thought for a moment. "There must be houses scattered somewhere in these dunes! There are several out past Montauk, and I'm willing to take a chance there are some around here, too."

"But I didn't see any."

"You can't until you're right on top of them," he told her. "After all, some of these dunes are as high as three-story houses. I know this country—I used to spend summers here."

AWAY from the shore side, the crest was three feet lower than elsewhere, making a shallow pass. Dan wriggled through, and waited for her to come, lying flat on the sloping side of the dune. Kit followed him with some misgivings. The breeze was strong now as she reached the little pass. Dan was well outside, letting himself down very slowly. As she rose to her knees, she suddenly saw her crouching shadow before her as a shapeless mass in a broad yellow swath of light that came from the direction of the highway.

"Get down!" Dan called, and dragged her down beside him. Kit turned over, and saw above her head a cone of light passing just across the crest she had left.

"They turned on the headlights of one of the cars," Don told her. "They must have been just about to leave. You were right—we should have waited."

"Did they see me?"

"I don't know," he replied. "We'll soon find out."

They heard the distant sound of a metal door slamming and, in a lull of the breeze, the voices of men. Then there was silence all around them. Another beam of light, very much stronger than the first, passed a few feet above them.

"That must be the searchlight on the running board of the Packard," Kit said. "I remember it now. They saw me, all right!"

"Now we've got to be moving," said Dan. "They'll probably leave those lights on, and come up after us on either side where we won't be able to see them."

He slid all the way down to the bottom of the dune, pulling Kit with him. They were hidden from the light which cut through the darkness some thirty feet above their heads. Dan turned to the left, running at right angles to the beam. Kit stumbled after him as well as she could, but her shoes kept filling with sand, while the high heels spiked down and retarded her. Although Dan was only a few yards ahead of her, he was almost lost against the sand. When they were a few hundred yards from the dune they had left, a small searchlight picked out Kit as she stumbled. She heard a shout, and in a moment of darkness she was just able to get around the corner of another rise. A gun cracked and sand spurted where she had been. In the same second the big spotlight swung around. At this distance it was rather faint, but could still throw a moving figure into relief.

A man to the south of them shouted, and was answered by some one much nearer. She felt Dan lift her up again.

"If we keep running straight in this direction," he whispered, "we'll always be in the shadow of this dune. The big searchlight will never get us—and we won't be exposed until we're out of its range."

Kit tried running without her shoes. It made travel easier, but her feet were continually cut by bits of shell. Then the ground changed. To Kit it felt much firmer, and instead of shells there were stones.

"We must be off the dunes," she said to Dan. "Which way have we been going?"

THE moving shadow ahead of her stopped and took on a definite shape as she came closer. She couldn't make out Dan's face until they were six feet apart.

"Away from the ocean; I'm sure of that," he said. "But we're not off the dunes. Every so often, out here, you'll find ridges of dried clay and gravel."

Kit put her shoes on again to ease the soles of her feet. From the angle at which she had to carry her body, she knew she was going uphill. Suddenly she collided with Dan, who had come to a sudden halt in front of her.

"Look down there!" he said.

Three lights shone almost directly beneath them, about fifty feet below. It was a house at the bottom of the ridge.

"We're safe," Dan said. "Perhaps there's a telephone there!"

"How can we get down? It looks as though it were a straight drop."

"It can't be straight with this kind of soil," he told her. "The slope wouldn't support itself. It's steep all right, but we ought to be able to scramble down. I'll go first."

She sat down gingerly with her legs dangling in the darkness. Dan turned around and eased himself over the ledge, seeking a footing. She could see him lower himself a few inches at a time. At each step gravel gave way, and she could hear it rolling down with a harsh sound. When Dan was about ten feet below her, he motioned for her to follow him.

"Did you find a path?" she asked, peering down.

"No, but it's not so bad. There's always some kind of foothold."

Just as she was about to lower her head beneath the edge of the ridge, one of the flashlights caught her. From the low intensity of the beam, she knew that they were quite a distance away. Dan saw her face lit up, and swore quietly.

"Hurry!" he said.

But Kit was in too much of a hurry. Instead of going one step at a time, she let both feet slide, and her momentum was enough to erase any foothold there might have been. She felt Dan reach out for her as she went past, but all he did was to scrape her arm against a rock. The rough ground slid beneath her, and she couldn't even see to grab at a bush or a stone. The whole world seemed to be on the move, thrusting her away. There wasn't even time to hold herself against the shock she was sure was coming. Her feet hit something hard and she was stopped momentarily; then she began to roll sideways. She turned over a hundred times before she came to a stop, and the black earth alternated with the starlit sky in an ever-increasing confusion until finally they seemed to merge. Before she could pick herself up, the avalanche of stones and dirt she had created caught up with her, banging her mercilessly.

"Kit!" Dan's voice came from the sky, but she was unable to answer. "Kit!"

Finally she caught her breath. But Dan hadn't waited. She heard him scrambling down, and then the rocks he loosened hit her. She pulled herself slowly to her feet to avoid them, but every move she made was agony. To her surprise, the house was only a few feet away. A door was thrown open, letting out a long rectangle of light. A woman stood there.

"Who's that?" she asked in a frightened voice.

"For heaven's sake, shut that door!" Dan said as he came running into the light.

He put an arm about Kit and led her into the house, brushing aside the stupefied woman, who stared at them in horror. They were standing in the kitchen. It was small, very neat and modern.

"Now close that door and turn out all your lights!" Dan snapped. Kit could see the impression his wild appearance made on the woman. She wondered what sort of monster she herself resembled. "Turn them out," Dan repeated, "or you'll get us all killed." He turned to Kit for the first time. "Any bones broken?"

"It feels as though every one of them were smashed into a million pieces!"

"Then you're all right." He turned to the woman impatiently. "Will you do as I say?"

SHE was a frail washed-out person in her late forties. Her eyes were enormous with fear.

"We're not going to hurt you," Dan said. "We're being followed, and if they see your lights they'll know where to look for us. If you turn them off we'll stand a chance."

The woman clasped her hands together as though the familiar sensation would help recall reality. "Who—who are you?" she asked.

Dan made a sound of disgust and walked to the wall where the light switch was. He flicked it, leaving Kit and the woman facing each other in darkness.

"Any other lights on?" Dan asked.

"No, that's all."

Dan's footsteps marched back again, and he was standing very close. When he spoke he tried to make his voice calm and reassuring, but it wasn't much of a success. Tenseness and excitement seeped through.

"I'm Dan Shay—Captain Shay of the United States Army," he said. "There are Nazi agents outside who want to kill me before I can telephone in a report—"

"Nazis?" In his very attempts to make it sound plausible, Dan had only made matters worse.

"Yes, Nazis," he repeated. "Now, where's the telephone?"

The woman swallowed. "I don't want any trouble," she said.

"It's not up to you," Dan told her. "It's here, whether you want it or not. They want to kill me and whoever attempts to help me. Now, where's the phone?"

The woman was silent for a moment, and then she found her voice again. "There are two telephones. There's one in here, and an extension in the front of the house. The one

(*Continued on page 56*)

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Most sailors have really learned how to button their lips.

A nice old lady was leaning over the balcony of an esplanade somewhere on the Pacific. "What's the name of that ship down there?" she inquired of a gob who was standing beside her.

"I don't know," said the gob.

"That's too bad," said the old lady. "What ship do you belong to?"

"That one," answered the sailor, and sauntered away.—*Pocketbook of War Humor.*

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WILL JOHNNY MARCH HOME TO A JOB?

Continued from Page 15

to peace. In these conferences, bold dramatic plans are being set forth.

Take, for example, the aims of the Committee for Economic Development,* probably the most important of the organizations co-operating with Selective Service's Re-employment Division. Headed by Studebaker President Paul G. Hoffman, and composed of top-flight economists, industrialists, bankers, and educators, this committee has waded into "the toughest assignment business and commerce have ever tackled." It will try to stir up 56,000,000 jobs for postwar America within two years of the Armistice. Department of Commerce economists estimate that we must have at least that number working if we are to avoid serious economic trouble. The figure represents 10,000,000 more workers than we had in the boom year of 1940 and only 8,000,000 less than are now employed at the peak of our war program. A 40-per-cent increase over 1940 production will be needed to make those jobs—or an annual output of $135,000,000,000 worth of goods and services. In all, a stupendous undertaking.

WHILE Mr. Hoffman's committee concentrates upon helping to create the jobs, another group—the National Clearing House Committee—will make certain that veterans obtain their rightful share of them. Established by formal request of Selective Service's Re-employment Division, its aim is "to co-operate with and supplement the work of existing federal and state agencies in returning to, or securing employment for, all persons who served in the armed forces." This committee, made up of representatives of important business, farm, and civic organizations, is expected to deal mostly with smaller business establishments—setting them straight on veteran re-employment problems. Such great corporations as General Electric, General Motors, du Pont, and Westinghouse have long had a definite policy on re-employment of veterans and will require no prodding. Other large firms are bound by re-employment clauses in labor-union contracts. And most big companies are aware of their responsibilities under this law.

The National Clearing House Committee will not try to achieve its objective simply by condemning to unemployment everybody who must yield a job to a returning soldier. Reasoning that civilians as well as ex-service men must prosper if the economic system is to stand up, it has made its companion objective the securing of jobs for "persons displaced by persons returned from the armed forces." And it will see that all concerns share burdens equally and that generous employers are not overloaded.

No great burden on employers is expected by Selective Service officials. Our veterans are coming home to good times. Most economists forecast a fairly rapid retooling of industry to peacetime production. Department of Commerce experts report that "enormous markets" which did not exist before the war will be available to American business. Moreover, shops, offices, and homes will be in desperate need of replacements of worn-out equipment. There will be a great demand for goods and services of all kinds as pent-up buying power is released. Spectacular new methods of production, distribution, and transportation will cut costs to consumers. Foreign trade is certain to zoom. In short, there will be, at least in the beginning, plenty of jobs.

But in case any slack does unexpectedly arise, Selective Service knows it can probably count on the giant public works program which the federal government has planned as a postwar buffer against economic recession. The National Resources Planning Board, an independent agency of the executive department, in its 1943 report lists a "shelf" of reserve public works projects providing for expenditures of $7,695,000,000 after the war. State and municipal works will swell this sum. It will not be spent for boondoggling. It is badly needed for reconditioning and building up the country. Atlanta, for example, will have new state office buildings; Omaha, a new school; Dallas, an auditorium; Detroit, long awaited new street paving; and New York City a giant produce market, another airport, and about $50,000,000 worth of housing—to mention but a few of the works being planned throughout the country. Soil conservation, flood control, reforestation and irrigation programs—all of the utmost importance—will round out the coming peacetime offensive against want.

Nevertheless, the administrative task of re-establishing 11,000,000 men in civilian life is staggering. Although Selective Service's Re-employment Division will be aided by the United States Employment Service, the Veterans Administration, the Federal Security Agency, and other federal, state, and local bureaus, it bears—as administrator and author of the program—the chief headache. Only the high caliber and experience of its personnel will prevent it from being bogged down.

Colonel Lewis Sanders, Chief of the Re-employment Division, has actually done this job before—although on a much smaller scale. As a veteran of the famous old 77th Division in the other war, he helped get his buddies set in civilian life at a time when veterans had notably few re-employment rights. Ten days after the armistice he had set up a complete re-employment and rehabilitation program for his outfit. An officer was sent home ahead of the division to line up jobs for the men. Result: there were 3,000 jobs promised before any of the 77th's enlisted men had landed back on United States soil. And in a few months all but fifty of the 27,000 returning veterans of the 77th had jobs or were otherwise re-established.

COLONEL SANDERS has been at work on post-World War II re-employment plans since the Re-employment Division was informally established in October of 1940—before it was even certain that, so far as we were concerned, there would be a new crop of war veterans. Today those plans are virtually complete. The leg work of the division will be farmed out to voluntary re-employment committees attached to each of the nation's local draft boards. Many of these committees are already in service—helping to find jobs for the over thirty-eight and physically under par men who are discharged from the armed forces. There will ultimately be one committeeman for every twenty registrants, thus assuring veterans of personal attention. Let's see how the postwar procedure will work—by following a soldier back home.

It is 194–. The world is rejoicing over the unconditional surrender of Germany, Italy, and Japan. Johnny D., along with several millions of his buddies, knows he will be going home before long. He has received an Army Occupational and Educational Record form. Filled out, it will record his civilian job experience, the extent of his formal education, and the kind of civilian job he prefers. He is not told to go back to the kind of job he had before he was drafted. He may have acquired new interests and skills in the Army. If so, he may not want to return to his old job—as elevator operator, for example.

His Army Occupational and Educational Record is carefully analyzed in Washington. He is classified according to: (1) background, training, and experience; (2) whether he wants his old job back or a new one; (3) his need for and willingness to

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An old story with a new twist turns up in the Book of the Month Club News—this time about Franz Werfel, whose smash hit, Song of Bernadette, has piled up heavy royalties.

Werfel met another refugee recently. "It is difficult here," the man said, "but you look prosperous. What have you been doing?"

"Writing a book," said Werfel.

"So? And it pays well?"

"Very well."

"Ah," sighed the man, "if only I had thought of that!"

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* An article describing in detail the set-up and operation of this committee will appear in Liberty next week.

accept vocational training; (4) the city or area in which he wants to work; (5) his physical handicaps, if any—this to be confidential. (The Re-employment Division will merely indicate to prospective employers whether he can do light, medium, or heavy work.)

Soon after he has sent his record to Washington, Johnny receives a letter from Selective Service. It tells him about the draft board's re-employment committeeman. As soon as he gets home, he is to light out for his local draft board to see his re-employment committeeman. That gentleman already has a copy of Johnny's Army Occupational and Educational Record. He is prepared to be Johnny's personal adviser and friend, prodding his old boss if need be, directing him to a new job or to training for one—in short, sticking by him until he is satisfactorily re-established.

Anybody who tries to evade the law protecting Johnny will find himself bucking a brick wall. If Johnny wants that elevator job back and his former employer refuses to give it to him, a letter will promptly go to that employer from Selective Service. It will remind him firmly, yet politely, of the law and the penalties. If that doesn't persuade him, a complaint will be filed with the United States District Attorney—and the law requires courts having cases involving veterans' rights to "order a speedy hearing . . . and advance it on the calendar." The employer, if found guilty, will have to rehire Johnny at once and to compensate him for any loss of wages or other benefits.

BECAUSE of injuries sustained in combat, some men won't be physically qualified to return to their old jobs. These men, above all, will be looked after by the government, whose basic policy toward disabled veterans has not changed. The emphasis today, however, is not so much on mere maintenance as it is on *rehabilitation,* defined by the government as "the restoration of a disabled person to his best possible mental and physical condition, and aid to him in preparing for and getting into employment."

Who can be rehabilitated? The most remarkable case is that of a veteran who emerged from World War I without hands or eyes. With the aid of mechanical appliances, he learned to operate a typewriter. The government provided him with a special instructor. He took up the study of law and was at last reports a successful practicing attorney in a small Western community.

With the many medical and surgical miracles which this war has already wrought, disabled veterans will be rehabilitated more swiftly and successfully than ever before. State and federal governments have the experience of World War I behind them. Moreover, they have the [illegible] of an early start. Re[illegible] began, at President Roosevelt's behest, almost before the smoke had cleared away at Pearl Harbor. And so successful is it that many of the casualties of Guadalcanal, New Guinea, North Africa, and other fronts have already taken their places on war-industry assembly lines.

These men are trained at government expense by the Rehabilitation and Vocational Training Division of the Federal Security Agency and placed by the United States Employment Service. Every effort is made to satisfy both the needs of the employer and those of the disabled veteran. Typical of the care taken in placement is the case of an eighteen-year-old marine who was badly wounded at Pearl Harbor. When his wounds were healed and he obtained his medical discharge, he was left in a nervous and irritable condition—with an odd desire to be left alone. The Wilmington, California, office of the United States Employment Service found an ideal spot for him in the blueprint department of a large shipyard. There he could work alone washing blueprints. The effect of working was so wholesome that soon he no longer wanted to work alone, and he has since risen to an important production job in the yard.

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Machiavelli says in his Maxims of a Statesman, in which he sought to instruct the monarchs of his time: "It is rather easy to get your subjects to sacrifice their lives for you; but be careful in imposing too high taxes on them; this might be dangerous to you!"

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The USES has not had to appeal to the sympathy or charity of employers to obtain jobs for disabled servicemen. Reports of its field representatives indicate that the handicapped veterans are being placed at a fast clip. Personnel managers are well satisfied with them. Doubt as to their value in industry has disappeared to a large extent. Characteristic of the attitude of many employers is the following memorandum of a large Indiana steel manufacturer to the USES: "We have established an office on the second floor of the bank building. Any of your veterans who can climb those steps to make application will be employed. Climbing the steps is the only physical examination that we require."

All of which bodes well for the postwar employment of disabled veterans. But the government will take no chances. They will receive special preference for federal jobs. And their right to free vocational training and rehabilitation has now been made law. On March 24, 1943, the President signed the Clark-Rankin bill guaranteeing a complete vocational training and rehabilitation service at federal expense for disabled veterans. This supplements and strengthens the present program, based upon a 1920 law. If private employers do not voluntarily give disabled veterans special consideration, compulsory measures may be sought. In England, private employers are required by law to hire one disabled veteran for every twenty employees. In France and Germany, employment of a specified number of disabled veterans in private industry has long been mandatory.

What about a serviceman's bonus? There is sure to be much discussion about this before long. Several bonus measures are, in fact, now being drafted for submission to Congress. But it is not considered likely that any of them will get far. Administration policy on this point, as revealed in the recent report of the National Resources Planning Board, appears to favor some kind of dismissal wage or allowance—akin in principle to the severance pay granted by many large corporations. The Van Zandt bill, calling for six months' pay continuance, is already up in the House.

AN outright cash bonus is opposed by many responsible government officials as unworthy of this country's patriotic tradition. Only in the last war was such a gift considered, and even that measure would not have obtained the American Legion's support if the gift had not been designated as readjusted compensation for servicemen. The classic argument against bonuses is contained in President Coolidge's veto of that bill—which was passed nevertheless. Coolidge declared:

"We owe no bonus to able-bodied veterans of the World War. The first duty of every citizen is to the nation. The veterans of the World War performed this first duty. The gratitude of the nation to these veterans cannot be expressed in dollars and cents. The respect and honor of their country will be rightfully theirs forevermore. But patriotism can neither be bought nor sold. To attempt to pay money for it is to offer it an unworthy indignity which cheapens, debases and destroys it."

Our government, however, knows that it does not debase patriotism when it sees to it that those who defended this country get their old jobs back, are made reasonably secure in those jobs, and are otherwise assisted in bridging the gap to peacetime living. Nor when it grants pensions to veterans who are disabled in line of duty, grants free vocational training to those capable of working, provides generously for the families of deceased veterans, gives free medical care and hospitalization to those whose injuries were sustained in the nation's defense.

It is plainly the government's intention to provide our new veterans with these and other elementary considerations—not as compensation for their sacrifices but as the most tangible evidence that that for which they fought has really been won.

THE END

GENTLE ANNIE

Continued from page 32

I said, "I'm afraid the Goss boys are in trouble. It happens that these little pieces of cloth might be used as evidence against them."

"Trouble"—and she mumbled the word. "Oh, I can't believe that Cotton and Vi—"

"Recollect that shooting last night? Suppose these rags of cloth could be used against them—a kind of evidence. I can't explain to you, because I'm not sure enough myself. Suppose some enemy of the boys found those little pieces. They'd be in for more trouble, wouldn't they? Annie, I took those scraps of cloth to keep them safe. The boys and Muddy mustn't know that I know."

Annie turned her face away. "Promise you won't show those things to any one."

"As long as I'm here on this place," I said, weighing my words, "I promise that no one else shall see them."

She sobbed, "I'm sorry, Rich, that I suspected." And she squeezed my hand sharply. "Rich—we're alone. You can kiss me if you want to."

Something seemed to get in the way. Even now I can't explain just why a man will say contrary things in such

a moment. But speak the words I did: "Maybe you would rather have Cotton."

She struck me hard across the mouth. Then she rode to the barn. I let her go on ahead.

Violet was alone in the barn, caring for Tony. Presently Cotton came to us, leading his horse.

Cotton stood behind me. "I was up on the ridge," he said. "What was the trouble, anyway? I saw her biff you in the face."

"All right," I said. "What about it? Did you ever have a disagreement with a girl who had a temper? I won't tell you why she hit me, but it wasn't for the kind of thing you think."

"Rich," said Cotton, "don't get me wrong. I know you're mighty fond of that girl. I reckon all of us are."

His hand rested on my shoulder for a moment; then he and Violet walked off.

When we got to the house, Muddy said Annie had complained about a headache and had gone to lie down.

I went to bed early in the straw-mow, no matter how much the others urged me to take their beds.

That night Annie came to me in the barn.

"You're surprised, aren't you?" the little witchshape whispered. "You didn't expect me to come." She curled on a corner of my blanket. "I just wanted to tell you I'm sorry." She began to cry.

The miserable problem that faced me went out of existence. I crept to the girl and hunted until I found her hand, and then her body to put my arms around.

I mumbled, tight against her neck, "Do you love Vi and Cotton?"

"I love all three of you."

I told her that it wouldn't do. She couldn't handle human nature like that. There would be hatred, jealousy.

To my protests Annie answered nothing at all. But when I had ceased complaining, and when I clutched her tighter than ever, she whispered, "Tell me about you, Rich. I don't know anything about you, except that I couldn't let you stay alone out here any longer."

There could be no attempt at wisdom now. I muttered through this overwhelming intimacy, telling little things about my boyhood, and other things too. I did not speak my real name, nor reveal why I had come to Oklahoma, and yet I might have informed Annie of even these things if she had asked.

She did not ask. She demanded nothing more except that I return her love. "Annie, Annie, Annie," I cried, with her hair in my mouth. . . . Long before morning she was gone away into the house again.

We were in love with her by this time: all three. I had known of men being in love with two or more women at the same time, but it was hard to believe that a girl's affections could be distributed in the same fashion. It was contrary, I cried, to woman's best nature.

But Annie Lingen bloomed as the youngest schoolgirl, and watch as I might, I could not discover a shade of variation in the open prodigality of her devotion.

As for the boys and me, our rivalry was buried as deeply as men could bury it. We were fervently polite to one another. The boys tried to beat me to the chore of saddling whichever horse I took out, and Violet rode bareback most of the time for fear I might be needing his saddle.

In return, I broke my neck to do the chores before the boys could get to them. After meals there was a stampede to see who might assist the women with the kitchen tasks.

The days were an extended frolic. I never heard so much laughter crowded into the compass of so few lives and for so brief a time.

I tried to believe this could go on; that I could waive all my suspicions, that they were wrong. And at times I almost forgot. Still I could not get out of my mind the threat represented by Barrow. As long as I put off my promised excursion to Pahoka City I could only watch the road past the willows with growing fear.

WEDNESDAY evening Violet and I had a rather bad time. Cotton had disappeared with Annie when we were all ranging far up Evening Creek. Neither of us dared mention the missing pair, but Violet's mind was probably as jealous as mine.

When they did come in, they had a long story about Sissy, Annie's horse, getting a stone in her foot and what a job it was to get it out again. Annie was more affectionate than usual.

"Rich," she said, when she put her lips against mine, "you're the steadiest. You're like marble or something—the Rock of Ages.

"And Cotton," said Annie, kissing him, "he's the most affectionate. He was the first to hug me."

She lingered over her kiss with Violet, and said that she loved him because he was gayest and wildest.

"I would rather," she cried positively, "live here than do anything else!"

"Even than go to the Pan-American Exposition?"

"Yes," said Annie, "even than go to the Exposition."

The next morning came clear and calm. After I had washed at the creek, I carried milk to the porch. Then, to my surprise, Cotton stepped out. Usually it was Violet who joined me first in the barnyard.

Disgust was written all over Cotton's face. "Look at this." And he handed me a torn sheet of paper.

A picture had been drawn on the sheet. I perceived the hand of Annie Lingen. It was entitled, "A Pik-nik," and underneath it said, "Annie + Vi."

As I examined this announcement of stolen holiday, my amusement yielded to the same annoyance expressed in Cotton's face. But there was nothing to do now. I went out on the porch and poured water into a wash-basin which we used for shaving. A mirror hung against the wall, and as I started to lather my face I could see Cotton hunched on the edge of the porch behind me.

"Let Wally Appleton do that," he said suddenly.

"Who's Wally Appleton?"

"He's the barber."

"You mean, go to town? Why don't I shave first?"

He cried with impatience, "Oh, come on, Rich! I'll treat for the shave. Muddy, we're going to Pahoka. You scratch out your list of groceries."

I put away my shaving things and followed Cotton to the stable. He had backed Quanah between the shafts of the light buggy.

His gray glance roved over me. "Get your gun on."

I got my revolver belt.

"Just thought I'd take Brew Tatum his headwear. He might catch the pip without it," he said.

Muddy trotted after him with grocery list in hand.

"One thing extra you add to that list," she ordered explosively, "if it's to be found in the city! I want a phonograph and lots of cylinders to play on it. Bands and marches: I like them best!"

The main street of Pahoka City lay bleaching and barren. No customers waited at the barbershop. So Cotton and I matched coins to see who would be first in the chair; Cotton won. That gave me a chance to go back to the washroom. I opened up my shirt and sought a tightly buttoned pouch of my money-belt. There I kept my detective's badge and my commission as a Special Deputy United States Marshal for that district. I removed the badge and put it in my trousers pocket. Then I went back to the front and read the Wide World magazine until Cotton was out of the chair.

I had a shave while Cotton shopped for groceries.

"Good job you got at the Goss place?" the barber asked.

I told him that it was all right.

He led around to the inevitable talk of gold on the Goss land, but I didn't have much patience with this.

Wally Appleton sprinkled bay rum gingerly. "Folks believe the Gosses have got a secret income."

"Any income they've got is a secret, far as I'm concerned," I said. "I wasn't hired to ask questions."

I went out, and met Cotton in the middle of the road.

"Rich, I got you a little present. I reckon you won't mind if you take part of your pay in found."

"What did you get?"

"Shells for that Bisley model Colt of yours—six boxes. You can shoot Violet off his high horse and win a lot of quarters from him."

He had made inquiries, too. There might be a phonograph for sale at Ole Flugstad's Racket Store.

"Reckon I'll take a look at it," said Cotton. "You want to come along?"

"No; I'll go and chew the rag with old man Barrow."

Cotton stared incredulously.

I explained. "He was the first person I talked to in town. Told him I'd drop in if I got a job around here."

"Then you meet me at Ole's place."

Barrow's store was gloomy and thick with bad air.

I called, "Mr. Barrow," and had to repeat the name before I got an answering mumble. I walked to a curtain, drew it aside, and peered into the space beyond. Lucian Barrow lay stretched on a sagging couch with two bottles and a dishpan on the floor beside him. I went over to the sofa. "Mr. Barrow," I said, "it's Rich Williams."

"Let me alone, son; I got to rest awhile."

"No," I told him flatly. "I must talk to you."

The old man made a supreme effort. He bent his shivering knees and dropped his feet to the floor.

"What about that bill? Did you show it to any one?"

"No."

"All right," I said. "Where is it?"

He made his way toward a washstand in the corner. He peeled back rotten oilcloth and produced his bank note.

I examined it. It was burned and frayed on one margin in a most peculiar manner, but no one might have noticed its condition unless he examined it closely.

"This doesn't prove anything," I said.

"That's what you think! All right, Mr. Williams! Maybe other folks will think different. I tell you"—and he scowled his determination—"I'm going to get that reward for turning in those train robbers! It isn't fun at my age to be kicked around by Charley Tatum because I can't pay cash for a bottle of cheer!"

I put my hand on his trembling arm. "You sit tight. Nobody will kick you around. If there's a reward to be had, I'll see that you get your share."

He shook with loose laughter. "Sonny, you talk big for a 'bo that was kicked off the blind baggage—"

I said, recognizing that I would have to go the limit: "I'm no hobo. I'm a detective for the railroad. I'm also deputized by the United States Marshal's office," and I showed my badge. "My instructions were to reveal my identity to no one. You're the first to know about me around here—and you'll be the last for a while!" At this point I had to romanticize in order to convey the necessary effect. "Are you familiar with the crime of obstructing justice? Well, Mr. Barrow, that crime of obstruction of justice carries with it a ten-year sentence in the Federal Penitentiary. If you so much as whisper to any one about my being an investigator, you'll automatically be guilty of that crime and I shall have you remanded for trial."

Right then and there I should have taken that five-dollar bill with me for safe-keeping. I didn't do it. But one thing I could see now. Things had to be settled soon, one way or the other.

I LEFT Mr. Barrow gasping ejaculations about his trustworthy qualities, and went to the Racket Store. A screeching yowl assailed me. Cotton Goss and the proprietor had placed a phonograph on the counter.

"How's that sound, Rich?" called Cotton.

"It sounds all right to me."

"Think Mud will like it?"

"She spoke about bands and marches."

Cotton said, "Ole's got those too—eighteen cylinders."

While I was putting these things into the buggy, Cotton brushed Brew Tatum's hat from under the seat.

He was already several stores away from me when I looked up. I seized a railing and swung up to the high wooden sidewalk which lay like a platform before the building in which Brew Tatum had his office.

My eyes were on Cotton, ahead. I didn't notice the men who waited beside a certain doorway. The attack came suddenly. Fingers gripped my shirt collar at the back. It was Charley Tatum.

"You're the fellow that tripped me last Saturday!"

He had used his right hand to snatch my collar, so I did the only thing I could do. I got his left wrist with my own left hand and pulled his arm straight out and then snapped it down.

If he had weighed less I might have thrown him over my head. Instead, he spun around twice as I whirled him away, and with a crash he brought up against one of the wooden awning posts. He clutched it, staring with puffy eyes. Probably he had never run up against any Japanese wrestling tricks before. He'd have pulled a gun, but I didn't give him time.

"This is the second time I know of," I told him, "that

you've had a gun taken away from you." I reached out and tossed it into the air. We heard it thud on the flat saloon roof. I hoped that it was broken.

Charley Tatum's eyes were marbles as I joined Cotton Goss. Cotton stood with the widest smile on his face, and I noticed that the folds of his coat swung back again as he took his left hand away.

"Come on," he said. "Let's shovel the Tatums off of us and not worry about them any more."

Brewster Tatum lumbered across the floor, stumbling away from us when we entered unexpectedly. There was one other person in the office: Mr. Prescott, who had sat in Saturday's blackjack game at Cookson's Bar.

We nodded at Prescott. "Tatum," said Cotton conversationally, "have you heard the political news today?"

The older man puffed his cheeks. "You cutthroat!" he whispered, and I think that took courage of a kind.

"Don't go calling mean names, Mister Tatum. I've done brought you a present," said Cotton, and he spun the hat across the desk. "You didn't expect to see that, did you? Now you keep out of our willows. You got your hat back, and no need to come again."

Then we both walked down the street.

ONLY once did Cotton say anything on the way home, except to speak to the horse.

He said, "Rich, let's all go to Buffalo, New York, to the Exposition." The next words he uttered were to the collie when she rushed to welcome us vociferously.

Annie was at a tub in the back yard, doing her washing, when we arrived. Violet came around the house and helped us to carry the gramophone in triumph to the porch and set it up on the wash bench. Muddy squealed.

The instrument blared all through dinner. Muddy ordered march after march, and swaggered around the kitchen as she worked, waving her fork like a drum major. Annie talked delightedly about her picnic with Vi, and Vi rolled his eyes at Cotton and me as she did so.

"I've only got this to say," said Cotton. "I don't think it's fair for some to go on a picnic and others not to get to. Isn't that so, Rich?"

"Leave me out of it," I said. "I'll discuss anything else, even Charley Tatum." Whereupon Cotton recited our adventure, in which I found that my own courage and agility lost nothing in this telling.

The Goss brothers didn't offer to help Muddy clear away the things when we were through with the meal. Cotton must have given Violet a sign. They went outside together. Annie was singing over her laundry in the back yard.

Muddy asked me to bring the phonograph into the house—she was afraid she might drop it. I was arranging it on top of the chest when the boys returned.

"Put on Dixie again, Rich," Muddy requested.

"No you don't, old lady," said Vi. "We're all going to have a talk."

Cotton said, "You got coffee?"

"In the pot. Won't take a minute to warm up."

Violet said, "One thing. Better put old Belle out on the porch, in case anybody comes."

There was something ominous in these preparations for what the Goss boys called a confab. Yet I was conscious that Vi was grinning.

"Go ahead," he ordered his brother.

"All right," said Cotton. "We want you and Annie to know that we were the ones who stopped the S. C. & W. and took that money."

A remote voice—it turned out to be my own—spoke up:

"That's pretty hard to believe, if you don't mind my saying so. I heard about that robbery in Pahoka City. There were two white men and an Indian."

Mrs. Goss giggled. "I made a right nice squaw."

"Squaw?" repeated Cotton. "You were a buck, Muddy!"

Annie Lingen exclaimed.

Violet began to laugh, and his mother was laughing all the time. Cotton joined in. After I had swallowed a few times, I sent my voice rolling along with theirs.

The boys had performed their first robbery nearly two years before. They did not confess their exploit to Muddy until after several months had passed. But when they did, she offered enthusiastic approval.

The poverty which the Gosses had suffered in the past seemed to them excuse enough for outlawry. They cherished a belief that the whole thing was rather a joke on vague corporations up north.

Said Violet, "We never have bothered the mail, though Mud urged us to. At first we thought it would be unfortunate to get the government policemen after us—"

Through the buzzing in my ears I heard my voice saying, "You don't have to actually rob the mail. It's all the same if you interfere with a train on which United States mail is carried."

"Certain—we found that out. But it just seemed like it wasn't fair to a lot of folks—ordinary people, farmers and such, like us—who had written letters. Love letters, maybe, and important family business. If we took all that mail and tore it up, looking for money, we wouldn't have felt right. So we never did carry off no pouches. Just express and railroad money—"

Annie watched with feverish eyes. There was a shock evident in Annie's face, but it was only the shock of amazement and never that of horror.

We men were her loved ones, her idols; we could be guilty of no wrong unless she saw us performing open outrage upon each other—and then, if the wickedness were explained to her satisfaction, she would forgive and forget. She had done just that after she believed I had stolen something.

The next hold-up was in the summer just past, and that was when Muddy went along.

Both Gosses had used dynamite in their well digging and they possessed a fair understanding of explosives, but their error was in the charge of explosives employed. They used too much dynamite and wasted a lot of currency as a result—they didn't know how much until they read the newspapers.

Violet Goss shuffled his feet. He asked, "Well, Rich?"

"You just told me a story," I said. "You didn't ask any questions for me to answer."

"Ever shoot a man?" asked Violet.

"Yes," I answered.

"More than one?"

"Yes."

"Are you having some real trouble with the law?"

If I wasn't having trouble with the law right then and there, I don't know what I was having. "Plenty!"

COT drank some coffee; he burnt his tongue, and sputtered, and exclaimed, "You see how it is, Vi!" He wiped his mouth. "You too, Muddy. Rich is already at outs with the law. He came to Pahoka with practically no cash in his jeans. I reckon providence sent Vi and me into Cookson's Bar that same day."

Then he looked over at Annie. "Do you approve, Annie?" demanded Vi. "Answer me that."

She said in a tone that faltered no longer, "You know I do. I approve of anything you boys do. I love you all." Dusk stood around us in that room, now that the last tint of sunset was fading from the windows.

"How about you, Rich?" asked Violet.

I cleared my throat. "The fact is, I'm not sure whether I believe you or not."

They regarded me incredulously. "I guess you don't mean we're liars?" Cotton chuckled.

"Just put yourself in my place—either one of you. You'd be surprised, wouldn't you? Jackstraws, tiddlywinks; phonographs and lamps for your mother. It just doesn't match up with stopping trains, that's all."

"Those things don't ordinarily go with doing what we did," laughed Cotton. "But you'll have to believe us after you take a look at the money we got."

"I'll believe it when I see the money, yes."

Muddy's match went yellow against the lamp wick. "You mean—if you see the money with your own eyes, you'll guarantee to stick with us?"

I chose my words. "When I see with my own eyes that you have the cash, I'll do one thing or the other: I'll either walk out and keep my mouth shut—and go where you won't be bothered by me—or else—"

Cotton said softly, "Yes?"

"Or face the law with you." Every word hammered a nail into a coffin—whose coffin I didn't know.

The Goss boys said they couldn't take me to the money, now that darkness had come, but they would do so first thing in the morning.

Muddy and Annie started to get some supper while we men sat around the table.

Cotton's round eyes shone as he recited his plans. He thought that he and Violet and I could drift up into Kansas, or perhaps go over on the Rock Island east of Pahoka. No one had held up the Rock Island thereabouts in years. He wanted us to make a better haul than they had ever made before.

The boys said they had nearly three thousand dollars left. That was enough to carry us through the year, but it wouldn't leave much for excursions to Buffalo.

None of us ate much supper. I said that I was tired and thought I would go to bed. Annie and Muddy both kissed me good night, and I wanted to cry when they did it. But I hadn't cried since I was thirteen, and couldn't begin now.

AS soon as it was light enough to see, I climbed down from the straw-mow and hunted for a grain sack; I had plans for the use of one. I found an empty sack, and tied it flat around my chest inside my torn shirt.

That morning the boys didn't come from the house until I was half through with milking. They took care of their horses and we talked about the Exposition while we worked. We didn't mention the problem and decision at hand.

Muddy and Annie had breakfast ready for us by the time we got to the house. I tried to get the pancakes down, but it was hopeless.

We men said good-by and took our hats. I stopped to buckle on my gun belt.

As we climbed the hill beyond Evening Creek, clouds were driving from the southwest, low and broken and dark. Still there wasn't enough rain to lay the dust, and for a time the dust came up like smoke whenever we struck a spot of raw ground.

It turned out we had only two miles to go. We rode off the Goss land and onto property owned by Mr. Prescott. The boys said that Prescott used to run a big herd over that country.

Cotton and Vi had buried their money in a buffalo wallow on a ridge. From the edge of the wallow you could look in any direction and have a perfect view of the land for at least a mile's radius.

"It's a good spot," said Cotton. "Vi picked it. One of us can set here on the edge while the other fellow digs, and see if any stranger offers to come nigh."

They hadn't brought a shovel with them, and I wondered how they were going to dig.

Cotton walked a hundred yards, then picked up an old garden hoe with a broken handle, sandy with rust.

He slid down the slope and walked part way across the wallow. He began to hack thin soil among the tumbleweeds. Just as he struck something with the hoe, I stepped around on the other side of the horses. I wanted to get out my grain sack before things had gone any further.

Cotton lifted out a tobacco canister of the same sort he had used for target shooting on the previous Sunday. I squatted beside it, and Cotton bent back the tin lid. The currency was there, all right, bundles of it.

Violet hovered beyond. "You low on cash, Cotton?" Vi called to his brother. "You want any?"

Cotton reflected. "Reckon maybe a hundred dollars. I spent forty-five dollars for that phonograph."

"Me," said Vi, "I've still got plenty."

Cotton picked out a package of one-dollar bills wrapped with a rotten rubber band. He made a big roll of the bills and jammed the wad into his trousers pocket. Looking at his brother, he nodded his head in my direction. "What about him, Vi?"

"Cot," said Violet, "that's a right wise question! I never did think of that. You need some money, Rich?"

I shook my head; I could feel my wet face growing numb. Cotton closed the lid of the can and slid the tin back into its cubbyhole.

"Of course we know what you're going to decide," he said. "Nobody wants you to leave." He hesitated, then added, "Annie least of all."

Cotton was giving me the beauty of his smile. "I reckon you'll take full note of the possibilities. The three of us—the way we can manage, no officers in the world might hope to stop us. We're agreed, Vi and me, that you're a man who could be trusted complete. Anything you guarantee to do, Rich, you do it."

He was forecasting doom, but I couldn't turn away.

It was simply a matter of decades. Thirty or forty years before (say that we had lived then!) there might have been a different story to tell. But this was the first year of the twentieth century. The Goss boys were indeed born out of their time.

"Well," I said casually, "I can't blame you."

Violet came down into the wallow, his boot heels denting the earth. "Can't blame us for what?"

"Most men would want to throw in with you," I said, "if they got the chance. On the other hand, I don't blame you for offering the chance to me. I'm your kind of man. If it comes to shooting, I've demonstrated that I can shoot rings around either one of you."

Cot looked a little annoyed. "I don't guess that's a polite way of joining in with us," he said gravely.

"He meant aimed fire, Cot," offered Violet.

"No, I didn't. I meant hip shooting."

"Rich," exclaimed Cotton, "I've fired my gun no way but that since 1893!"

I turned abruptly, climbed to where the horses were standing, found the grain sack, and came down again.

I said, "I fetched this bag inside my shirt because I thought I'd want it for a target." I took the bag to the end of the buffalo wallow and spread it; and from where the brothers stood it presented a very fair target.

WHEN I came back I said, "In any sort of enterprise there's disagreements bound to come up. There's got to be one boss; you know that. To my mind, the ideal boss is the man who's best with his gun. Isn't that fair?"

Cotton said, "Yes."

"In aimed fire," I said, "I can outshoot Violet, as I've done—and most assuredly I can outshoot you, Cot. I'll show you now that I can outshoot both of you from the hip, not sighting. Five rounds. Fast as you can fire."

Cotton grinned, but his eyes were extremely bright and his lips colorless. Not until then had I realized the inordinate pride he took in his strange accomplishment.

"Vi," asked Cotton, "is it worth while your trying?"

Violet shook his head, but just the same he drew his .38 and planted the gun tightly against his right hip bone. He got one hole in the sack.

Cotton Goss pushed his left boot firmly into the soil. When his holster turned forward, I began to work back a few paces. I counted the shots, rapidly though they came. None of us ever loaded six chambers of his revolver. Even if Cotton's gun was emptied in a few seconds, it seemed like half an hour to me.

I kept watching the sack. It danced on the weeds—one corner flew up. It seemed to be punched again and again.

Cotton twisted his head to look at me with all the pride in the world. Violet looked with him. Then they saw what had happened, as I stood covering them with my Colt.

I said, "Don't come this way, boys."

Neither moved.

"I had to get your revolvers emptied."

Their faces were sick under the raindrops, under the dabs of clay. I told them to keep their hands up.

I nodded to Cotton. "You keep both hands up. Now, Violet, you reach with your left hand and pitch your gun over here. I know you're hell on wheels with your right hand; I don't want you to throw that gun in my face."

Fresh sweat covered his forehead, but he obeyed me.

"Now, Cot," I ordered, "reach over with your right hand and let me have yours, same way."

Silently he tossed his .44. I picked up each of the guns in turn and stuffed them inside my belt.

Cotton spoke hoarsely: "Go ahead, Rich. We were a couple of fools. Take the money and get out."

I said, "I want the money. That's the reason I brought along that grain sack. But I want you boys, too."

I told them why I was there; why I wanted them.

I said, "I gave a fake name. My name isn't Rich Williams—it's Lloyd Richland."

Then Violet asked, "You the fellow they call Shorty?"

"Yes."

"Reckon we've heard about you. You took in that Burrows gang last year. We heard of that clear down here."

"I can trust you for one thing, Cotton," I said, "but I'm not so sure about Vi—he's mighty reckless. I'll trust you for this, Cot. You put yourself in my place. It'll be hard, but you try. You're an officer. You do your job. It's what you took your oath to do.

"Cot," I said, "my life's in your hands. You put yourself in my place. If you don't agree that you'd do exactly what I've done, I'll give you this gun, butt end first. You can either keep it on me until you ride away—or you can blow my brains out. If you hate me enough."

Cotton dropped his hands; he took a step forward.

All he did was to pick up his hat and try to smash the mud off by swiping the hat against his thigh.

"The hell!" he told his brother. "I reckon he's got us, Violet." He whispered, not looking at me: "Like he said—his job. What the Creator put him on earth to do."

I said thickly, "So you see it that way. Put down your hands, Vi. Take the grain sack and empty that tobacco into it."

COTTON peered up through the driving wetness. "You going to arrest Muddy too?"

"I don't know what to do about it! What would you do?"

He thought for a time. "She was in on it. You know how Mud is—like a little old child, kind of. She'd never be happy with us boys off in the penitentiary."

I climbed into my wet saddle and took the reins of the other two horses in my left hand.

"Sorry," I said. "You'll have to walk."

Before we reached the ridge commanding a view of the Goss farm, I became aware that Belle was barking loudly.

Vi and Cotton heard her, too; they quickened their pace. Mounted as I was, I could see the house before they could.

A group of people on horseback moved in front of the porch. Rain and mist swept between. Then the ground dipped and I couldn't see the house any more, but was startled to hear a pistol shot, followed almost immediately by the roar of a shotgun.

I overtook Violet and Cotton as they ran.

"Here!" I yelled. "Take your horses—"

Evening Creek splashed our legs. We burst up the slope. Belle was lying near the front gate. We skated into the yard. There weren't any riders in sight.

Muddy sat in her chair on the porch as if she had been pushed there—her head turned a little. Annie Lingen bent over her. There wasn't a sound from them at first. Annie wasn't screaming; but when we came closer we could hear Muddy's breath, and it sounded like steam.

Annie said, "They shot her. They shot her—"

Violet screamed, "Who? Who shot her?" Annie said that she wasn't sure—she thought it was the sheriff. It must have been that Tatum man—Brew— A man had cried, "Brew, you shot that woman!"

Perhaps it had been around daylight that morning when Mr. Barrow staggered across the street to Cookson's Bar.

(Certain events of the day were recited by Annie Lingen and by men who talked to me after I was locked up; and from what I know of the Tatums and Cantwell, I can plot the stark chronology.)

The bar wasn't open yet, so he waited on the steps.

At seven thirty the bartender unlocked the door and Lucian Barrow shuffled nervously inside to yield up his few coins. He begged for credit, but the bartender dared not grant him any; so Mr. Barrow went fawning on Charley Tatum. It was shortly after eight when Barrow was refused credit in the most profane and final speech which Tatum could command. Mr. Barrow's body quivered.

"I got a five-dollar bill," he said, "but I don't dare to spend it! I want to leave it in trust with you. Soon as I collect for some pictures, I plan to redeem that bill."

Charley Tatum wanted to know just why Mr. Barrow couldn't spend the bank note.

"This here is my five-dollar bill, Mr. Tatum!" said Barrow. "You got to swear you'll keep it in trust for me."

Charley carried the note outside to look at it. Then he sent for Sperry Cantwell. Other men came into the saloon. The bill passed from hand to hand.

Then they gave old Barrow a small tumbler of whisky, and he became talkative in an unsteady fashion.

Sheriff Cantwell sat beside him, but at first the photographer wouldn't tell where he got the bill.

"No; that's for the detective to decide. . ."

"What detective? I bet you don't even know him."

Mr. Barrow squealed, "Yes, I do. Him and me—we're going to collect five hundred dollars. Dead or alive—"

They poured him another drink. Brew joined in.

"It's all right to tell the sheriff about it," chuckled Brew. "Any child would know that's all right."

Lucian Barrow told.

Charley Tatum ran to his house—a stone's throw distant, on the street behind the saloon—and got a gun.

He and his brother, with Cantwell, agreed that the whole thing was clear. I was a bandit, along with the Gosses.

Naturally, the Tatums said that they had known all along the Goss boys robbed the train. To make up a posse, they called in a tenant of Charley's and a civil engineer named Bradley who had been a sharpshooter during the Spanish-American War.

A crowd gathered at Cookson's and another at the wooden courthouse. Vi and Cotton had never endeared themselves to Pahoka City. They were too reclusive, and they had a painful way of meting out small justices whenever they chose—as witness Cotton's restraint of Kite on the day when Annie arrived. Annie told me the rest of the story. She was ironing, and Muddy was looking at a tattered cookbook for a marble cake that Violet liked.

They had the phonograph going. They had just put a record on a second time when Belle set up her barking.

Muddy and Annie went out on the porch, to find five

men riding into the yard. Mrs. Goss recognized the Tatums.

"We're after your boys," said Sheriff Cantwell, "and that stranger who's staying here."

Muddy cried, "My boys aren't to home! You vamoose!"

The only reply came from Charley Tatum, whose black mare was plunging wildly, due to the activity of the dog. He rode toward the collie, lashing with his quirt.

Muddy was inside the door like a flash.

When she came out she had her shotgun. The gun was loaded, she was cocking the hammer. A revolver banged in the yard. Then a man's voice yelped, "Brew! You shot that woman—"

The gun dropped from Muddy's hands and went off. Maybe Brew was shooting in honest self-defense when he pulled the trigger; that was what he cried to people in Pahoka later.

Annie saw blood on Muddy's arm. At first she cried, "Oh, honey, they shot you in the arm!" But the bullet had passed through the tight calico sleeve and round flesh. It had entered Muddy's side and drilled deep.

"Let me set," Mrs. Goss was gasping. "Let me—set—"

The horses moved nervously in the dooryard.

Some one muttered, "Let's get." They moved furiously. Twenty hoofs spread across a wide area, stamping the ground, so there was no telling just which man rode over Belle and put an end to her barking.

WHILE I hung over Muddy the Goss boys had ample opportunity to snatch back their weapons; or they could have taken my loaded gun from its holster, but no one of us thought about that.

Mrs. Goss opened her eyes slightly. She whispered, "Gramophone—put on—cylinder—" Probably she wanted to hear a military band such as she favored; but when Violet started the machine the tune was The Whistling Darky.

Muddy was past listening to it. She crossed over while the record was still playing, I think.

Cotton and I carried her to her bedroom. Cot hunted around until he found a clean sheet, and then he spread the good linen cloth over the figure on the bed.

"If we'd been at home," he said, "I reckon this wouldn't have happened—not the same way." There was no malice in his tone, though by that time I was accusing myself of every crime contrived by man since he began to sin.

Through the window I saw Violet looking at the dead dog.

"Want to take Muddy to town in the wagon?" I asked.

"No," Cot whispered. "If she can't ride nice in a hearse, I don't want to tote her to town at all. When pappy was shot, this was newer country. There wasn't much law and fuss around. We just buried him, 'Dust unto dust.' I guess that's out of the Bible."

I told Cot, "I'll make affidavit about her death. Do you want to build a—take boards and make—"

"She always liked growing things," said Cotton. I remember now the remote quality of his voice. "She'd just as soon not have boards around her."

Cotton walked to the porch ahead of me. I saw that the ironing which Annie had done was piled on a chair. I drew the Goss boys' revolvers from inside my belt and slid them under the pile of new-pressed clothes.

Cotton and I went to the barn. I took a pick and he found a long-handled shovel. We crossed Evening Creek and began to dig a new grave close beside the grave of George Goss.

Soon after we began our work, Violet came to us. We took turns, working for at least two hours.

We made a little pit for Belle, and then went to the house. Annie was sitting on the porch awaiting us.

Only a wet spot, drying fast, showed where the floor had been scrubbed. There was a white bundle on the porch—a sheet tucked around neatly. That was Belle.

I took the heavy ironing board into the bedroom. We carried our burden down to the creek and up the steepness of the opposite side.

We put Muddy in her grave, and stood with cool wind touching our hair. Annie began to recite the Twenty-third Psalm. I heard a murmuring; the Goss boys struggled to join in the recitation.

Violet said, chewing, "Can we depend on you, Rich, to—maybe put up some kind of a mark later?"

Annie was watching with frightened wonder.

"I'll look after it—later," I said.

Annie cried shrilly, "There's something—I guess there's something I don't understand."

"Rich is a officer," said Violet dully. "He's going to take us away for robbing that train."

Annie could say nothing; she stood and stared.

"That reminds me," said Cotton easily. "Just where did you put our pistols, Rich?"

I mopped my face. "Look, now," I said. "You've got to understand things. I won't say any more about Muddy. You ought to know how I felt about her. Those men didn't try to serve any warrant."

Cotton said, "Rich, where are our guns?"

"It'll be investigated!" I cried. "It'll be squared off, as much as it can be now. But the fact remains that you boys are in my custody. Don't worry. I'm not going to turn you over to Sperry Cantwell. I'll take you up the line on the train. One of these days Bush County is going to be blown inside out, and plenty will happen to Cantwell and the Tatums then."

I drew my revolver, and Annie whimpered.

"Please come on," I said.

Cotton merely folded his arms and smiled. He suggested, "Annie, you go ahead with the gentleman if you want to. Vi and me, we're not going to Pahoka—not unharnessed."

Cotton said, "Rich, get this straight. You give us our guns and we'll ride right to Pahoka along with you. We'll do what we got to do. And then we give our oath to come peaceably wherever you need to take us."

I heard my voice shaking. "Damn it! Do I have to shoot you boys in sight of your own mother's grave?"

"Reckon we couldn't name a better place."

My hand began to wobble. There wasn't any other way out of this. I might have known it all along.

"All right. I put your revolvers under Annie's ironing on the kitchen chair."

They reached the house ahead of me, and when I came in they were loading their weapons studiously.

"Anything you want, Rich," said Cotton, "you better take along now. I don't know about her. If she wants to stay here—" He looked at Annie questioningly.

The girl put her fists in front of her eyes.

"Not here!" she cried. "I can't stay here any longer."

Cotton said, "Vi, you take your saddle off that Tony horse and put it on Sissy."

Quanah and Tony were in their stalls, saddles and all, and we found Chief grazing over beyond the dump. Cotton had dumped the grain sack containing the money on the porch a generation before. I found the bag, got some twine, and tied the sack firmly to my saddle horn.

A minute later we were all going down the lane. The Goss boys didn't look back at their house; Annie's face was frosty and hard. I looked back once and wished I hadn't.

WE were about two miles from Pahoka when I heard a freight engine whistling on the southern prairie. "That's the freight for Portersville. I'm going ahead and try to hold it. Meet me at the crossing."

I slapped Chief into a run. Once I looked back. The Goss boys and Annie were jogging behind.

As I spattered down the last slight hill I could see a freight train crawling through the flat valley ahead. The engineer was blowing for the station. When I reached the track, the freight caboose stood a few rods beyond the crossing.

I looked up Main Street to the stores lining the flat hilltop. Square and ugly, they stood against the sky as they had the previous Saturday.

It wasn't hard to pick the freight conductor now.

"You're the conductor?"

He nodded quickly.

"You'll carry passengers," I said.

I showed my badge, then my marshal's commission and a letter from the S. C. & W.

"What can we do for you, Mr. Richland?"

"Hold this freight." That would cost me my job, at least. "You'd better go in and send a wire," I said. "Tell Oakley and Portersville that I'm holding you here."

I gave the rein of my horse to the express agent. I walked back about ten paces from the caboose, and then halted on the track. A man approached warily.

It was Mr. Prescott and two other men.

Prescott held up his hands to show that he wasn't armed. "I want to talk to you a minute," he called.

I looked at the road. The Goss boys and Annie were coming. I could see the sun on Annie's hair.

"Look here, mister," said Prescott. "We don't want our town turned into a shooting gallery."

"You've let it turn into something worse."

"Now, we heard Mrs. Goss was hurt!"

I said, "She's dead, Mr. Prescott."

Prescott's good-natured face turned gray.

"Anything to this story about your being a detective?"

"Yes."

He stammered, "Well, why the devil didn't you identify yourself the other day?"

I told him that I was working on a job; I didn't dare identify myself.

"Cantwell doesn't believe that story for a minute."

The Goss boys were near enough for us to see their faces. Prescott looked at them. "Look here," he muttered rapidly to me. "The Tatums have got men stuck all over town. Cantwell's sworn in half a dozen more deputies. You got to keep these boys from town."

THERE was nothing in the world I wanted to do more than that, but I couldn't see how to manage it. Cotton muttered to Violet. They stopped their horses near the platform. Vi reached over and grasped Sissy's rein, when Annie Lingen had trouble holding the mare.

"Cot," I said, "Mr. Prescott is a friend of yours. He's just told me that the Tatums have got men everywhere along Main Street, waiting for you to come."

Cotton's eyes caressed those hilltop buildings. "In memory of our mother, we got to go."

I seemed to see it before I heard it—the quick snarl of a rifle shot. I saw Violet dumped against Tony's neck as the colt shrieked and flung his head.

Tony swung his forefeet, arching far—struck his feet against the ground once more, and began to buck. Still screaming, he went pitching up the right of way; Vi was hanging on, but only with his left hand.

Mr. Prescott's finger shook as he pointed. "Right over there! I saw him—on the pile."

The pile he meant was a heap of railroad ties. Some object moved on top of them, and I ran that way. When I was still about ten feet from the pile, something rushed past me: Cotton Goss, going faster with his long stride than I could go.

A man dropped to the ground from his station atop the heap. He had a Winchester rifle.

It was the civil engineer, Bradley. He rode on that fatal expedition to the Goss farm, but I had never seen him before.

Cot's revolver spurted in its weighted holster.

Bradley lay chewing the weeds. His legs drew and bent, and then ceased to move.

I thought Annie must have been shot (some one had cried that she was), but as I looked toward the tracks I saw her taking out a handkerchief to wipe her clothing. Annie's hand crept to her chin as she stared after Violet. She had been thrown by Sissy. The wounded colt had struck Annie's mare in his first lunge. Chief and Quanah had been frightened loose as well.

I cried, "Cot, Vi's all right—there he goes!" The buckskin colt was pawing far west along the tracks.

Now Annie came stumbling toward us. I was beside Cotton, and I gasped, "Hang on to Annie, Cot—see if she's all right." I went running down the tracks.

The distant buckskin spun like a top; he was coming back now, first on one side of the rails, then on the other. They went by me, maybe twenty feet away. Violet was still hanging on, but his face looked like nothing human and his right arm swung limp from the shoulder.

I tore in pursuit. Once I glanced over my shoulder. Cotton was still with Annie. She was keeping him there, hanging on to him, though he struggled to get away.

I wanted to herd Violet away from the main street. I couldn't do it. The side lane—the alley beside Barrow's studio—was a broad avenue leading to destruction. At first it seemed Tony might go jerking safely away into open country; but his rolling eyes had picked the cleared path which led uphill.

They roared past as I reached the lane, and I heard shots rap and echo between the buildings. Tony spilled into the mud, head down. I ran up alongside a clapboard structure bordering this side-hill lane.

On the porch of the Palace Hotel, Violet's chief enemy waited—Brewster Tatum—and I was surprised to see him. I had thought he might be cowering under a bed. There was hardihood about the man—though it didn't take much courage to shoot at an injured rider.

Violet Goss had been thrown heavily when Tony went down. I could see him on his knees.

He attempted to get his gun out of his shoulder holster. Twice he tried to lift his right arm, and failed. I saw Tatum lift the rifle he was carrying.

There wasn't any reason in the world now. I wasn't an officer; I was just a man who had been fond of Violet Goss. I leaned against the building and my right hand slid down to my holster.

My gun wasn't there. It lay, perhaps, hidden in weeds back yonder along the path of my scramblings.

Brew Tatum fired, and so did the men by the feed store. I don't think any of the bullets hit Violet. He came up with his sore left arm and worked his revolver out of its holster.

He fired. Tatum dropped heavily against the post.

Cantwell and Tatum people closed in. The avenue down which Violet staggered led up blind against Charley Tatum's house, but I didn't know it then.

Fifteen or twenty men were pressing toward Violet. Cantwell said, "Get him!" and a solitary shot banged in answer. Violet jerked, but kept going. A man made a strangely casual query: "Charley, anybody in your house?" And Charley Tatum answered from the hotel porch, "No! Shoot the hell out of him!"

Violet fell against the Tatum house, but Charley and the others kept hurting him with their bullets.

I TURNED around and went down the hill. Halfway toward the station I found my revolver, lying amid foxtail grass. I picked it up carefully. Something snapped in my brain.

Often, I had heard that expression used, but didn't realize the literal accuracy until it happened to me.

Smoke and steam were drifting from the locomotive—I could hear the hiss and singing they made. People by the train had heard all that shooting in town.

There were Cotton Goss and Annie Lingen and Mr. Prescott—these whom I knew—and a smear of others.

Annie's face was tear-stained and savage, but she clung still to Cotton's left arm.

"Rich," he gasped—"Rich, where's Vi?"

"He's all right," I said.

"What was that shooting? Did they get him?"

I said calmly, "They'll never touch him."

"Did he get Brew Tatum first?"

"Yes."

Cotton rolled up his gray eyes; I heard him yell.

I said, "Get into the caboose—you too, Annie."

They climbed the steps. I went around the corner of the freight house. My grain sack was still fastened to Chief's saddle. I gave it to the freight conductor.

"You turn this over to the super at Portersville. He's expecting it." His gray head nodded obediently.

"The moment I come out of the caboose, get rolling.

The man and woman are to ride to Oakley. Stop there and let them down. That's all."

"I thought they was bandits," said the conductor.

I told him, "The bandits are still uptown."

I got into the caboose and unfastened my money belt. Annie and Cotton Goss stared, wide-eyed.

I put the currency into Annie Lingen's lap.

"This train," I said, addressing Cotton, "will stop at Oakley. You get out with Annie, and strike off somewhere. Anywhere. I don't care where you go.

"Local people took the law out of my hands," I said. "Now I'm taking the law out of theirs. I'm a judge and jury too. You could get another train westbound at Oakley tonight, but they'd probably be tracing you by that time. Better buy a couple of horses or maybe a rig—it's up to you. You take care of Annie."

I turned away, but Cotton Goss had my arm in his steel-trap grip before I'd moved six inches.

"Rich, you mean Violet actually got away?"

"They'll never catch up with Vi," I said positively.

"Why are you letting me go? I mean, *helping* me go—"

"Maybe I think it isn't fair for you to serve your time when Violet never had to serve his!"

Annie cried softly—cried my name. When I turned around, she was there to kiss me.

Right then I had a lucid second in which I saw things clearly. I realized that Annie had drunk deeper of love with me than with either of the Goss boys. She would be a dream in memory as long as I was capable of memory. Annie had loved all of us, but she still had one left.

I thought I would probably get ten or twenty years, but actually I received a shorter sentence; and that was for letting Cotton go—not for the thing I did behind the Palace Hotel that afternoon.

On my way uptown a few people may have seen me coming, but a big crowd pressed around Violet at the Tatum house; they had him exhibited on the cellar door.

I think Cantwell and Charley Tatum were discussing plans for our pursuit at the very moment I found them.

A shabby black bug tried to push its way among the people—a bug carying a load. It was Lucian Barrow.

I told him, "If you want pictures, wait a minute. You can take a lot." I was past the crowd by that time, and Cantwell and Charley Tatum saw me coming.

The way they started shooting, it is a wonder more people weren't struck. Two bystanders were wounded—but not by my bullets, and not seriously.

I only had to fire three shots. I went into the hotel and threw my gun on the desk, and waited for somebody to take me into custody—to see that I paid an important debt which justice assured me should at once be paid.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By E. A. PILLER

WHEN France fell, there were people all over the world who were stunned; there were people who knew France well and were heartbroken; there were people who had known her in better days and were unbelieving; and everywhere there was the question How? or, Why?

To those who found France's defeat a puzzle and to those who were shocked by it, Ilya Ehrenburg's novel, **The Fall of Paris** (A. Knopf, N. Y., $3), will have especial interest and significance.

Ehrenburg presents a picture of Paris and of France, before and up to its fall, which is alive, real and immediate. His characters are varied. They are little and great, rich and poor, moral and amoral, patriots and scoundrels, workers,

Ilya Ehrenburg

artists, politicians, soldiers, but all people, all authentic and all as human as the world itself shows them.

Here is an old man, Tessa, a wily and unscrupulous politico, kind to his wife, amiable to his daughter, indulgent to his son, ardent to his mistress, and forever scheming in and out of cabinets. His daughter falls in love with a Communist, his wife dies, his son is killed, another of the many soldier casualties, shot by a civilian because he asked for food, after the army broke. Yet, to the end, Tessa schemes and maneuvers, picks up a new mistress, helps form a cabinet, helps to deliver France to her enemies.

Boone T. Guyton

Here is Desser, a man who makes money almost mechanically, who is temperamental with the workers and yet stands for finance against them. Here are the men and women who were France in her hour of peril and tragedy. Their stories are numerous; they are varied and often involved; they are true to life.

Ehrenburg has written a contemporary novel in the classic tradition. It is a slice of the living world. Readers are not likely to forget it soon, and they will learn much from it.

Another book that gives a glimpse of the tragedy of France's defeat is wholly American. It is written by a former U. S. Navy flyer and a present test pilot. It is **This Exciting Air,** by Boone T. Guyton (Whittlesey, N. Y., $2).

Besides a love for his work and planes, Guyton has a knack of expression. Here, for instance, is a passage which follows his description of a plane he cracked up.

"There is something about a ship you have nursed through hours of testing and learned to admire and respect. You know it is good, that it will roar its very heart out for you. . . . You have gently pulled it from the ground, treated its power plant as another's feelings, rolled it . . . through clean skies. . . . You honor it in no small way for taking you out of one world into another."

Guyton's planes took him on dangerous tests, on flights where in a split second he must decide whether death or he would ride in at the controls. They took him to France as war broke, where he watched Frenchmen take off in outmoded crates to battle a well equipped and numerically superior enemy. A brave man himself, who could face death when the odds were reasonable, he knew how gallant were these men who faced it with all odds against them.

His book is a tribute to them, to all flyers and especially to the test pilots, who are in the vanguard of flying and who see more of This Exciting Air than almost any others.

Ike gone, and Milly Slocum keeping to herself out in the hills like a wounded wild bird, and Webb and Charlie Murdock hitting the moonshine heavy and brooding like hurt bears.

It was almost a year later, to the day, that I was in the courtroom hearing a hog-stealing case. There hadn't yet been any real trouble between the Murdocks and the Regans, mainly because the town constable had his orders to watch them like a hawk whenever they were in town. The witch's caldron of trouble was still brewing, though, and in my heart I knew it was going to boil over sooner or later if something didn't happen to clear the air.

I saw Johnny out in the courtroom audience, and I knew he had something on his mind. Johnny didn't get to town more than once a month, and then he hit it back to the woods as soon as he'd bought his supplies. He was waiting out in the hall after the trial was over, standing there grinning in his shy way, his eyes glimmering with an odd light I'd never seen there before.

Johnny said, "Howdy, judge," and we stood there chewing the fat, but with me doing most of the talking, because Johnny doesn't usually say more than yes or no.

"How are the quail this season?" I asked, trying to lead him out. "I've been thinking of oiling up my old gun and coming out for a hunt." He allowed there were a few fair to middling coveys, but I saw that whatever was on Johnny's mind, quail shooting wasn't it. Finally I asked him outright: "What's on your mind, Johnny?"

He grinned. "I got me a yaller-eyed potlicker pup, judge. Didn't know but you might like to come out when I let him loose on a big coon I got spotted."

"Why, sure thing, Johnny," I said. I was a little surprised that Johnny had forgotten the drowning of his favorite hound so soon, but I didn't let him see it. "When are you goin' to take him out?"

"Oh—" He looked kind of vague, as if it didn't matter much, and I knew by that it couldn't be too soon to suit him. "Most any night."

I said, "Suppose we make it about next Wednesday, then."

"All right, judge. I'll be waitin'."

I watched him turn and go out the courthouse hallway, a lithe little fellow, and skinny with it, but wide in the shoulder and narrow in the middle, with the meat set on his bones like strap iron on a hickory frame.

THERE was something brooding and melancholy about the deep woods when I drove out to Johnny's cabin that afternoon. We'd had an early frost. The oaks and hickory trees were smudged with amber and russet. A bank of clouds was gathered over to the west, and it looked as though we might have a thunderstorm. And, for no reason I could fathom, I suddenly fell to pondering over the killing of Jay Murdock, and thinking of the lives it had warped.

I heard the steady thud of Johnny's ax before I crossed the spring branch and turned the bend in the road leading to his cabin and clearing. Then I could see him across his meadow, felling a giant hickory tree in his yard, his shoulders swinging tirelessly and his double-bitted ax biting deep, with minute accuracy at every swing.

I had reason to recall that ax later, though I didn't notice it in particular then. It was the only one like it in the county, hollow-ground and razor-sharp, with a green-elm handle that had the spring of a buggy whip.

Just then the new dog opened up with a bellow that sounded like somebody shouting down a rain barrel, and the big black fellow came racing across the meadow toward me. I thought I knew then why

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Hyperinflation, as is well known, took possession of European countries during and after World War I. In this period a monument was unveiled in memory of Olympic Games which showed three undressed Greek youths running. A wit described it: "The last taxpayers are leaving the city."

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Johnny had been comforted over losing Gabriel's Trumpet. The new dog must weigh close to eighty pounds, I guessed, as muscular as a mastiff, and beautiful glistening black all over. He had teeth that shone white as porcelain, and satin-soft ears drooping below his shoulders. But what made a man notice him most was the color of his eyes. They were yellow like a cat's, with lights glowing deep in them and flashing like sparks from a blacksmith's anvil.

He came through the meadow with a rush, and he was perhaps halfway to the road when Johnny dropped his ax and hollered at him, "Charcoal! Come back here, you yaller-eyed hellhound, before I kick a rib out of you!"

Charcoal stopped so short he slid for a couple of feet, sent a last defiant bellow in my direction, and went trotting back to Johnny. I drove up and reined in my horse, and Johnny stood there grinning at me, the big hound braced in front of him sniffing and eying me.

Johnny said, "Howdy, judge. Charcoal, meet up with Judge Burleigh, and mind your manners or I'll kick your back teeth out." Charcoal wagged his tail and came up and sniffed of my pants leg as I got down to the ground.

I never envied any man his dog, but I come mighty nigh to envying Johnny Kellogg then. If you could say any dog had Gabriel's Trumpet faded, Charcoal did. I found myself starting to hope right then that nothing would happen to him. Then it hit me kind of sudden that the big coon Johnny was so in a lather to run down was probably the coon that had drowned Gabriel's Trumpet.

WELL, we picked up Johnny's carbide lantern and his target rifle and went riding back down the road in the buggy, with the big hound trotting complacently alongside. We headed for the wild country along Cowskin River back of the Slocum place, and I said to myself, Burleigh, you've hit the nail on the head all right. Gabriel's Trumpet had been drowned in Cowskin River, and the etched lines around Johnny's mouth and the suppressed look in his eyes told he was thinking of his lost dog and the coon that had done for him.

The rain struck just as we turned off the country road and onto the elm-lined lane leading to the Slocum place. I touched the mare with the whip, and we dashed along to the Slocum house at a sharp clip.

I said, "Hadn't we better drop in on old Ben Slocum till the rain slacks, Johnny?"

He heard me, but he didn't answer. He sat there beside me, suddenly gone rigid, staring through the lane of trees into the pasture beyond. Involuntarily I turned my head to see what he was looking at.

It was Milly Slocum, driving the cows in for the evening milking, a forest goddess in faded gingham, her black curls glistening with the rain, spilling out from under a blue bandanna and whipping in the wind. She stopped and looked at us once, with her wild-fawn eyes, and something like an electric shock passed between Johnny and her. Then it broke and was gone, but I'd felt it so sharp that it made me rather uncomfortable for a minute.

We went on into the Slocum yard, and a half dozen mongrel dogs came swarming toward the black hound. Old Ben came charging out of the house like a bear from a cage, brandishing a four-foot club and knocking dogs right and left. By the time the mongrels were all streaking for the woods in howling disorder and Johnny had collared Charcoal, Ben Slocum was standing there in the pelting rain looking at us, a suspicious mountain of a man with snapping black eyes and thick hair streaked with gray.

I said, "Hello, Ben. We're on our way to the river bottom for a coon race. Thought we might drop in for a spell till the rain slacks off."

Ben Slocum was rumored to be running a whisky still somewhere out in the deep woods to tide him over the hard times, but I counted that none of my business, and I'd just as good as said so. The half-defiance and suspicion went out of

him, and he gave us a friendly grin. Then he called into the house:

"Hey, Marthy! Set a couple of extry plates for supper. We got company." He turned back again and said to Johnny, "You can shut your critter up in the woodshed, son."

Johnny took Charcoal to the woodshed out of the Slocum dogs' way, and I put the horse and buggy up in the barn, then we went into the house with Ben. Marthy didn't waste many smiles on anybody, but she said, "Howdy, jedge, howdy Johnny," real sociable as we came in. She was a lean woman, not given to words, with her daughter's haunted eyes.

We sat down to a quiet supper of side meat and collard greens, with biscuits and gravy, topped by apple pie and boiled coffee, while the rain rattled on the shake roof and the house shook to its foundations from the roar of the thunder. A queer kind of constraint seemed to be holding us all to silence. I couldn't fathom it, and it bothered me. I looked around the room for some explanation of it. Johnny sat there like a bump on a log, bolt upright in his chair, not looking at anybody. When even old Ben doesn't say anything, you can know there's something in the air.

Milly didn't come in to the supper table, but I could hear her out in the kitchen, talking in low tones to Marthy and helping with the dishes. Then suddenly I saw her appear in the partly opened kitchen doorway, some intense but unreadable emotion in her face, her gaze fixed on Johnny Kellogg's stiff back. She stared at him for a full minute, flashed one wild glance in my direction, then slipped swiftly out of sight.

As we finished our meal, the pelting downpour subsided to a gentle patter on the roof, then died completely, and only the faint reverberation of the receding thunder sounded still.

WE left, afoot, from the Slocum place, in pitch darkness. I thought it was odd that Johnny didn't light his lantern, but I followed him through the murk without mentioning it. The atmosphere was close and wet, and every brush with the tall weeds or overhanging branches brought onto us a miniature downpour, like a dash of water from a well dipper. The night and the darkness seemed overpoweringly alive, bearing down on us, isolating us in some uncanny way, as if all life and reality were restricted to Johnny and me and Charcoal.

At length Johnny stopped. We must have come at least three miles through the dark. He said to me, "We might as well start here, judge."

I struck a match to light my pipe, and glanced around me in the light of the flare. I recognized the spot. We were beside a little spring on the hillside, above the north bank of Cowskin River.

Johnny released Charcoal there, and the hound started away, snuffing and blowing, advancing in concentric circles from the spring. He opened up now and then, tentatively and without much enthusiasm. Then he stopped altogether.

When he opened up again, he sounded off slow and easy with that big voice of his, and we knew he'd picked up a cold trail. But gradually the tempo of his music increased. The trail was getting hot. From over on the log where Johnny had sat down I could hear Johnny's breath coming in tense short gusts, and I could see the rapid glow and die of his pipe as he puffed feverishly on the stem.

By now the hound had traveled from our position by the little spring in a wide arc, with a radius of some hundred yards. His path had dipped down by the river and curved back to the west of us, away from the river.

Suddenly his baying stopped, and the silence of the wet woods and the dank atmosphere closed in on us like something you could almost feel. Neither Johnny nor I spoke. We were almost holding our breath, waiting for something, I didn't know what. Then Charcoal shattered the silence, in full cry. He was on a hot trail, and right on the heels of his quarry.

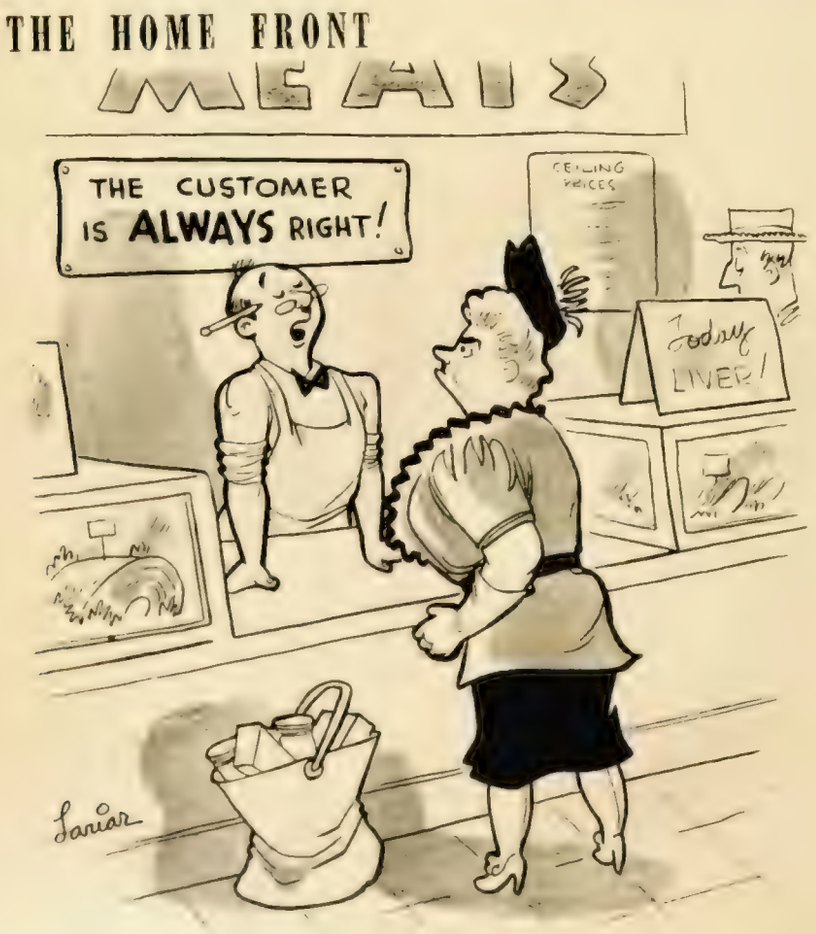
I THOUGHT. The big coon won't get away from that boy. Johnny jumped to his feet. "Come on, judge! Charcoal's got his critter." He lighted his lantern and went charging off through the wet woods, running fast, before I could snap on my pocket flash and get to my feet. I raced after him, but he was already far ahead, his carbide light cutting a fleeting swath of illumination through the oak and hickory trees. He ran like he had eyes in his feet, and though I'd never seen him worked up like that before, I thought I understood. The big coon that had drowned Gabriel's Trumpet was going to pay his bill.

Then, as I chased along after Johnny, it suddenly struck me that Charcoal wasn't acting exactly like a hound on the trail of a coon. The dog and his quarry were coming much closer now, and the chase was progressing in a series of short spurts, with Charcoal snarling in a fury. Once he yelped as if he'd been nipped by a catamount.

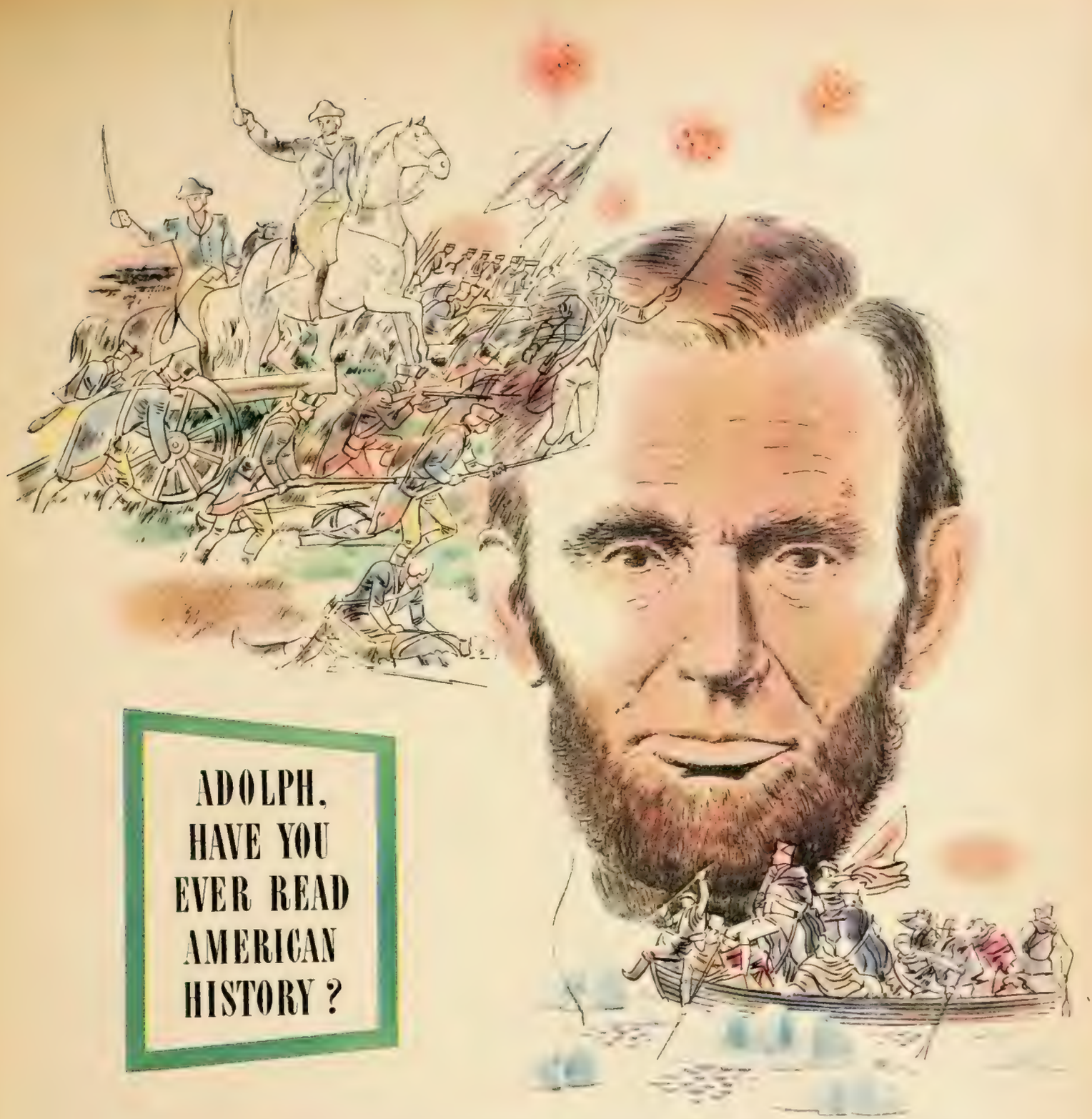
Then suddenly I heard Johnny shout, and his voice was fierce with triumph. "Get him, Charcoal!" A shot cracked up ahead, and I saw Johnny's carbide light go out. Then I heard a wild cry. I thought it sounded almost human, and I wondered if the hound had got a cat instead of the big coon.

I raced for the spot where I'd heard Johnny's voice and where Charcoal was now barking "treed." I ran with something of panic breaking in me, forgetting I'd already run too far and too fast for a man of my age. But that sound of Charcoal's furious baying was loud in my ears, and the odd triumph in Johnny's cry, and most of all the loud crack of that

(*Continued on page 52*)



"Frohung-bush—I should have taken that down long ago."



ADOLPH, HAVE YOU EVER READ AMERICAN HISTORY?

IT COVERS OVER THREE CENTURIES of cutting through and grinding down all opposition. Whether this happened to be wilderness, savages or tyrants has made no difference. We've taken them all in our stride.

Yes, Adolph, we started out as free men and we intend to remain so. Remember the last war we fought to save Democracy? You ought to! You were on the losing side.

When our President set up the quotas for our '42 and '43 war production programs your Herr Goebbels shouted "fantastic, telephone numbers . . . it can't be done."

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(*Continued from page 50*)
shot. And Johnny's lantern had snuffed out with the shot.

The rifle cracked again, and I caught the flash of the gun. I was running and panting so hard, I was sharply conscious of only two things: the fact that the bullet from that rifle had slashed bark slivers from a tree branch close to my head, and that the gun flash had seemed to come from a spot above the ground, high up.

Then Johnny yelled at me a frantic "Put that light out, judge!" I snapped off the flash in a kind of stupid wonder, not yet quite assimilating the impact of those swift and confusing impressions. I stumbled forward through a tangle of blackberry vines and pokeberry and fallen logs, guided solely by the sound of Charcoal's mad uproar. And suddenly Johnny spoke again out of the racket, right at my side: "Take it easy, judge. Gimme your flashlight."

I fumbled toward him, and he groped for my hand, snatched the flashlight and went tearing toward Charcoal. He made a slight crashing in the brush but the sound was faint in the confusion and the darkness. I stood where I was, soaked to the hide from perspiration and the water shaken onto me from trees and brush. Time seemed to stand still for a sort of appalling hiatus, with only the dog's wild uproar and the hard, fast beating of my own heart impinging on my senses.

Then Johnny snapped on the flash, and the beam of light lanced twenty feet upward into a big white oak, fixing on a crouching shapeless bulk clinging to the bole of the tree. Two guns barked then, one from the tree and one from the ground. The flashlight snapped out. A hard voice snarled from the tree:

"You got me, Kellogg, I'm hit bad."

Johnny said, "Drop your shootin' iron, Ike. I don't hanker to have you get a bead on me, so I ain't turnin' on the light again just to see how bad you're hit."

Twigs and branches snapped and swished, and I heard the metallic sound of a gun barrel striking the flinty rocks underneath the oak. Then Johnny snapped the pocket flash on again and poured the beam beneath the tree to make sure it was the gun Ike had dropped. All the time Ike was snarling at Johnny, "Call your damn dog off and help me down! My arm's broke."

Johnny said, "Shut up or I'll shoot you down." He played the flash around till he located his carbide lantern, still lying where he had dropped it when Ike took that pot shot at him. Charcoal was still raging about the foot of the oak, and Johnny didn't call him off. I hadn't yet untangled the twisted undercurrent of what was happening before my eyes.

Then another cry sounded in the wet black night, a wild high cry with a sob in it, not from Ike Regan's oak tree, but from the woods behind us. It was Milly Slocum crying, "Johnny! Johnny! Are you hurt?"

Johnny was lighting the carbide lantern as she dashed into the area where we were, and she stopped short, relief wiping the wild fear off her face. Her dress was ripped and torn from her heedless rushing through the woods; it clung to her body in wet ragged tatters. Johnny just looked at her, and a slow smile spread over his face. He said:

"We got the big coon that drowned Gabriel." Then he turned and called up into the tree, "Come on down. Judge Burleigh's got you covered." I had, by the time Johnny flashed the light up in the tree again.

Ike yelled, "Call off that damn dog!"

Johnny said contemptuously, "You yaller ——! Down, Charcoal. Heel, boy, heel! Down!" Charcoal turned reluctantly from the tree, dropping back to all fours, and stalked around behind Johnny and sat down, still growling in his throat, and Ike came down the tree.

Nobody said a word as Ike shambled toward us, and I halted him, and Johnny tied him tight with a stout cord he'd brought in his pocket. Then we set off toward the Slocum place, where my buggy was waiting to take Ike to jail and the gallows, and still nobody said anything.

WE went along for about a half mile, then Milly looked at me sharp in the light of the carbide lantern, and I knew suddenly Johnny had been waiting for her to say it. "Jedge, I found that there ax that killed Jay Murdock."

Johnny said harshly, "It was still in Jay's head. She pulled it out and brung it home."

Milly said, "Johnny's ax. That holler-ground double-bitter with the green-elm handle."

Johnny swallowed and looked at me. "It ain't fitten that a man should marry with the shadder of the gallows hangin' over him."

I said slowly, "If you knew Ike was holed up out here, why didn't you report to the constable and let him come for him with a posse?"

Johnny's voice was patient: "Seems to me the constable and his posse done a lot of lookin', Judge Burleigh. I done a lot of lookin' myself, but I couldn't trace him. It took a dog to do that."

I said, "Gabriel's Trumpet!"

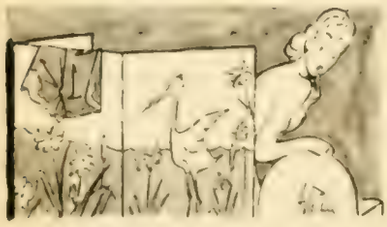
Johnny glared hate at the hunched back of Ike Regan, tramping through the wet woods ahead of us, covered by both our guns. "Yeah, Gabriel. No coon alive could of pulled him under water. No coon alive could of bashed his head in with a club. His hide was puffed up from bein' in the water, but I could feel his skull with my fingers. And when I was buryin' him I stumbled onto man tracks and grub leavin's near the spring. I been trainin' Charcoal for six months to trail—man tracks."

Milly suddenly reached for Johnny's arm and hugged it against her side. She said to me, "Johnny had to cl'ar it up, jedge. He felt he was beholden to me because I washed the ax and brung it home. We want you should marry us, Jedge Burleigh."

Johnny said, "Now I got to train Charcoal to track coon."

THE END

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY *(Unabashed)*



WONDERWHERE: Lost panties.

AMBIRDEXTROUS: Killing one bird with two stones.

CHALKOLATE: Pale cocoa.

BAAZAAR: Sheep fair.

SCISSORO: Roman orator noted for his shear wisdom.

BOOQUET: A corsage from Boris Karloff.

McANICK: An Irish machine operator.

MUCKASINS: Indian shoes for deep mud.

NOISTURE: Rain on a tin roof.

PILLFER: To steal from a doctor.

then it felt strange not to be away alone with Jerry; she couldn't pull the two together and feel natural.

"I'll have to begin collecting the stuff I parked here," Jerry remarked.

"I'll have to sort out some everyday clothes," said Bess.

"Everyday clothes?" Jerry repeated.

"I can't take just honeymoon clothes to Blairville," she explained. "But the family can send most of my stuff on after me."

There was a queer silence, and she looked around the room and thought curiously that they were all staring at her with fixed faces as if they were having a photograph taken. Then the faces broke into expressions, but they were all wrong: Holly looked abruptly sullen, and her father's smile was the one that used to go with the castor-oil spoon, determinedly bright, and her mother leaned forward with a strained anxiety in her brown eyes. Bess turned to see Jerry, and the surprise and trouble in his face chilled her like cold hands at her throat.

"What's the matter?" Bess asked slowly, staring straight at Jerry.

"Bess," he said, "I never thought —I didn't— Bess, did you expect to go with me?"

Silence closed down again. After a long minute Bess said, "Yes," and heard the word sink into the silence.

"But, Bess," Jerry began finally, "I took it for granted you would stay here with your family. We didn't make any plans, but—"

Her mother said swiftly, "Of course Bess is going to stay here where we can look after her. I never—"

"Wait," Bess's father broke in. "Let Jerry handle this."

Jerry stumbled on again: "I never thought you would want— Bess, of course I was going to send you my pay—I never dreamed you were planning to go with me. You wouldn't like— You couldn't—"

"But—Jerry—" Bess said, half whispering, and then stopped. Why didn't he want her?

"You never said anything about going with Jerry," said her mother.

"Of course I didn't," Bess answered stormily. "I never planned to do anything else. Why talk about it when we were crazy busy, with the wedding to think about? We didn't talk about anything. We just went ahead and did things." She set herself to speak more urgently: "I'm Jerry's wife—why should I live here?"

Jerry shifted his shoulders as if they were tired. "You don't understand, Bess. You wouldn't be comfortable or happy in Blairville, alone most of the time. Your mother said you'd be miserable there."

"When did she say that?" Bess asked, but Jerry was pushing on, faster now.

"You're used to being taken care of, Bess. Army camp wives have a pretty tough time. I'd be worried all the time about you. You're just a kid—"

So that was what he meant when he'd said on the train that she looked like a little girl. Bess swallowed the hotness in her throat. "I'm nineteen," she said. "Jerry, just answer this. Don't you want me with you?"

Jerry stood up. "Let's go for a walk," he said abruptly. "You'll excuse us, won't you?" he asked the family.

"We know how it is," Bess's father told him.

Jerry and Bess went out of the house and down the path under the willows by the brook. When they reached the curve and slowed, they were quite alone, with the willow leaves lacing down around them.

"Listen," Jerry said. "I thought you knew how I felt about you." He pulled her close, almost grimly. Bess had her hands against his chest, so the shaking of his heart thrummed into her fingers. "I love you," he said, and his heart went on faster, and the words faster under her hands, till her fingers tightened against him. But she made herself pull away.

"Maybe you do," she said, "for two days and nights, for some kind of living that's off out of reach now.

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But I want to belong to you wherever you are."

"Bess—" he said.

She wouldn't let him go on. "This war business, Jerry—you haven't got me mixed in with that; you don't need me or want me there. Not even for a little while. That's your life now, and you're keeping me out."

"I shouldn't have done it," Jerry said sharply. "When I heard your voice on the phone—and the things you said—I just went ahead and asked you. I shouldn't have done this to you."

"You shouldn't have done it," Bess answered slowly, "if you wanted just a bride and not a wife."

"This is war marriage, Bess. You don't know what it's like, staying in a place like Blairville. I see some of the wives—they're unhappy and bored and cross. I won't do that to you. You think it would be romantic and exciting, but it would be deadly for you. The wives get so bored and lonesome that when their husbands do get passes to see them, they scrap and complain. I don't want that happening to us—"

BESS stared at the brook, at the branches, anywhere but at Jerry. "You see some of the wives," she repeated, "so—other wives are there, but you don't want me. You're sure I'd make a mess."

"I'm trying to be sensible and practical—" Jerry began.

"Did I ask you to be sensible and practical," she wanted to know bitterly, "when we've only been married two days?"

"That's a childish way to talk."

"Stop saying I'm childish," she blazed at him suddenly. "You're only three years older. If you want to be free at camp, and not have to bother with me, why don't you say so?"

"When you say such crazy things, Bess, you prove I'm right—you're not ready for anything so tough as—"

"Stop it. It's too bad you married me, I'm such a failure."

"Bess—" He reached for her, but she stepped back quickly.

"And don't touch me, Jerry. You've spoiled things—you've twisted everything. Now you can't fix everything by kissing me, as if I were a little girl with a bump. Even if you do seem to think I'm some kind of arrested development. No, don't try, Jerry."

She turned back along the path and he went with her silently. They walked at the far borders of the path. Once Jerry's swinging hand brushed against hers, and she pulled away swiftly.

When they neared the house, Jerry said in a tight remote voice, "Maybe it would be better if I left right away."

Out of her anger and hurt and pride, she heard herself saying coolly, "I guess you might as well." She mustn't cry till he was gone, and how was she ever going to hang on?

Her mother and father found errands out of the house and took Holly firmly along with them. What they said to Jerry, Bess didn't know. She said good-by to him in the hallway where she had met him. Before, she hadn't wanted any one to see her gladness; now she didn't want any one to see the emptiness between them.

"Good-by," she said—just that, because there wasn't anything else.

This time he kissed her carefully and lightly, as if something would break between them at any pressure. "Keep writing, Bess," he said. He took three steps and the front door closed behind him. Bess stood very still, and for a minute she had the sound of his footsteps, and then she didn't have that.

She went up to her room, and for the first time in her life she locked the door. But now she couldn't cry. She sat in a chair, her hands in her lap, and there wasn't anything in the world worth lifting her hand for.

So now she knew what she had done. Rushed into marriage because Jerry had asked her on an impulse; tried to bind him when he wanted to be free. For an instant the memory of their two days cut sharply at her, and she forced the thought away. That was an island in living, that was loving, but it wasn't the going-on kind of marriage. Now she had swung a long way back from ecstasy, and her doubts had hemmed her in.

A long time later she stirred stiffly, and saw her bags by the bureau. Remembering them standing beside Jerry's, in their own room, she couldn't take it. She pulled them open, and crammed the contents into drawers and closet till the bags were empty and could be thrust out of sight under the bed.

Having done that, she unlocked the door. After all, she couldn't stay in her room the rest of her life. She went downstairs and out to the kitchen. Holly passed her in the hall, and looking at Bess's face, drew back against the wall.

There was dinner, and there was some sort of conversation, and there was lying awake till sleep was an unexpected darkness to fall into. The next day was as dim, and nothing pricked through the numbness. Other people went on doing their regular things, but none of it connected with Bess.

A WEEK of this went by. Jerry wrote, and the things he told her were of a foreign world, and the word "love" in his handwriting was just a word on paper. Her mother came to her one afternoon.

"Bess," she said, her smooth forehead tightened with worry, "I want to have a talk with you. I thought you'd miss Jerry the way some of the other girls in town miss their husbands, but I thought you'd settle down and take it as part of your job."

Bess shook her head. "I haven't known Jerry long enough. I needed this time with him, so we'd be all bound together when he went abroad. You can't settle down when you're adrift."

There was a long silence before her mother answered. "I made a mistake, Bess. I told Jerry he mustn't take you with him. I told him you

HARDTACK

"Everybody talks about a second front. With this report card I should have a second rear!"

were too young, that it would be selfish of him." She waited steadily for what Bess might say.

Anger stirred faintly in Bess, but that didn't matter either. "If Jerry had really wanted me with him," she told her mother, "nothing you told him would have got to him. So you needn't feel responsible." She turned away before her mother could try again.

More time went by dully, with so much pain just under the dullness that whenever it cracked through, Bess shrank back into the safe place where she thought of nothing but where to move next, what to pick up, what easy words to say.

Then the envelope came from Jerry, with one line on the sheet inside. "Do you remember—" he had written, and nothing more.

That slashed through the dullness, and all the pieces of remembering cut at Bess. Did she remember? Now she couldn't stop remembering. How did he dare write her that, when he was just having a mood again, being lonely again?

She couldn't stop thinking, and the hurt whipped her on, and her mind fought to get her out of that place. If she felt like this—if she wanted him like this—why didn't she try to get what she wanted? If she weren't the child he thought her, she would take some action. They had something together—they had it, but she didn't know how to use it. Maybe he didn't understand how she felt.

Before she had time to stop herself, she took some paper and began writing him, the pen driving across the pages and not going fast enough.

"Jerry," she wrote, "I need to be with you now, to get ready for when

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

At a White House press conference in the days of Calvin Coolidge various reporters were vainly firing their questions at the President.

"Have you anything to say about prohibition?"

"No."

"Have you anything to say about the World Court?"

"No."

"About the farm situation?"

"No."

"About the forthcoming senatorial campaign?"

"No."

The meeting broke up and the reporters began to file out of the room.

"And," called the President, "don't quote me." —*Thesaurus of Anecdotes.*

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

you go away. I've got to know you better before you go.

"Jerry, I want to be sure we have a baby.

"Jerry, there are so many things pulling us together, but we have to have more time to get the knots tied.

"Jerry, help me grow up faster."

Then she wrote, "Do you remember the blue roses on the walls?

"Do you remember what you said the first night?

"Do you remember the first time we woke up in the night and realized we were there together?"

She mailed the letter as drivenly as she'd written it. Then she waited, for a night and a day of dogged battling with her fears.

He phoned, and she went to the telephone with emptiness in her and around her, waiting for what he would say.

"Bess," he said. "Bess, I got that letter. Bess, would you marry a soldier?"

She pulled her voice out of somewhere. "What soldier?" she said.

"Me," he said, and such a short word to have a break in it.

"Who was that soldier I married before?" she managed to say.

"The train leaves in twenty minutes," Jerry said. "I had to stand in line to make this call. Get on that train, Bess."

"Yes," she said.

"Bess, why didn't you ever tell me those things before, you little fool?"

"Because I was a little fool."

Jerry's voice deepened. "Shut your eyes."

"I am," she said.

"Can you see the blue roses?"

"Yes," she said.

"Then hurry up and get here, Bess."

THE END

"Don't develop rumors!"—says HATT to HI

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in this room is over there, next to the refrigerator."

Dan and the woman walked away from Kit.

"Do you have a car?" Kit asked. The woman didn't answer at once. She stopped as though something peculiar had caught her attention. "What?" she asked. Kit repeated the question.

"Yes," the woman said slowly. "It's in the garage next to the house. My husband is away."

DAN picked up the telephone and asked for a number. "Where's the road around here?" he asked while the operator made the connections. "I thought you were off in the middle of nowhere."

"There *is* a road. It leads out into the shore highway between Amagansett and Montauk."

"How far from Amagansett?" Kit asked. She didn't remember passing any road.

"Three and a half miles."

"I see," said Kit. They had been running away from the shore, but also away from Amagansett. She had driven into the dunes about a mile and a half from the town. "Is it a good road?"

There was no answer; the woman had gone. Before she could wonder what had happened, Kit's attention was held by Dan's voice.

"Captain Shay calling. . . . Let me speak to Colonel Simon, please. I said *Shay*—Captain Shay!"

There was a long silence; it extended through the house and even beyond.

"Isn't he there?" Kit asked.

She was answered by a peremptory "Sh!"

"What's the matter?" she demanded.

"Good heaven!" he murmured. Then he spoke into the telephone. "Yes, Lieutenant Price—but why?" There was another pause. "Very well, then!" Dan said sharply, and hung up. The click sounded final and ominous.

"What is it?" Kit asked again. She ran across the dark room to Dan.

"My commission is being temporarily withdrawn," he told her, as though he didn't understand what he was saying. "They're acting on a confidential report, just received, that I'm mixed up with subversive activity. . . . Paul got there first!"

"But who told you all that?" she asked. She placed her hand on his arm to reassure herself.

"Nobody told me; I overheard it. The colonel's not there, but as soon as the person who answered got my name straight, he grew all excited and I could hear him telling some lieutenant standing near him who I was. I heard only a little bit, because evidently somebody had sense enough to cover the mouthpiece."

"And then?"

"Then the lieutenant got on, and told me I was to appear for an interview tomorrow. I asked him what the purpose was, and he was very evasive—said it was merely routine. Probably an Intelligence officer." He snorted. "And I thought I was being so clever!"

"What do you mean?"

"Look, Kit. I tried to pull a fast one on you this morning. Just before I left the museum with you, I called up headquarters and tried to get in touch with Colonel Simon. Simon's an old friend of mine. At least, I thought he was!"

"You were going to turn me in?"

"No, not that! I just wasn't sure what was going on, that's all. You don't think I'm fool enough to run out on what sounded like a wild-goose chase without any preparation? On the off chance that something might turn up, I felt that it was my duty to make some kind of preliminary report."

"Go on."

"Well, Simon wasn't there, so I dictated a message to be left for him, marked 'Important,' giving him only an outline of what you told me, without mentioning your name. I told him that if I didn't report by telephone to him by four o'clock this afternoon he was to get in touch with Paul Campbell, and I gave his address."

Kit waited; in the dark she couldn't see his face.

"So, just to make everything easy for Paul," Dan went on sarcastically, "I had to arrange for Simon to march out to Paul's just as we took it on the run, so that Paul could fill him with a beautiful version of the facts. And, let me tell you, Paul must have told him a damned convincing story, because Simon and I used to go hunting together every year!"

Kit turned away wearily. "Now what?" she asked.

He walked over to her, and she put a hand on his arm. She could feel him shrug. They were standing near the window, and, looking out, they saw that a light had been turned on upstairs. The square of light illuminated a large patch of lawn outside.

"What the devil is that?" Dan demanded.

Another light went on, then still another on the opposite side of the house. They could hear the woman's footsteps above them, rushing from one room to another. In the half-light Dan's face was very clear, hard and set. He pulled away from Kit and ran to the front of the house. His feet sounded on the staircase, and then Kit heard the woman scream.

"*You're* the Nazi!" she was saying. "I heard it all on the telephone. I knew there was something wrong as soon as I heard that girl's foreign accent. You're both running away from the police!" Her voice became hysterical. "I don't care what you do to me, but you're not going to get away!"

KIT was at the foot of the stairs, and as she looked up she saw Dan standing at the first landing, with the woman blocking his way. The entire upper floor was brilliantly lit as though for a grand reception. From the darkness Kit saw Dan's angry face twitch as though he were trying to say something that would satisfy the woman. But then he gave it up as a bad job; there just wasn't time to convince any one. The woman obviously expected to be killed, but she wasn't giving any ground. Her eyes were wide and hard, lit by a tremendous fear that was half anticipation.

"We're not going to hurt you," Kit said, more out of pity for her suffering than from any idea of making her change her mind. She hated to be responsible for that kind of suffering; she had suffered it too often herself. But the woman stared down at them, not believing.

"Come on!" Dan said, running down the stairs. "It's too late now. There's nothing we can do but make another run for it."

They stepped from the darkness of the house to the darkness of early night, which was complete except for the glaring lights of the upper floor. Dan paused for a moment to get his bearings. The garage was

"I brought a friend for your kid brother."

twenty feet to the left of the house, and he ran for it, avoiding the lighted patches of ground.

"Let's hope the key is in the car," he said. "We could use a little good luck for a change. Hold that door open for me."

He disappeared inside. Kit caught a gleam of glass as he opened the car's door. Above her, a window slammed up, and the woman stood there in silhouette.

"You won't get five miles from here before the police catch you!"

Then she withdrew, leaving chintz curtains billowing gently in the draft through the house.

The headlights flared on deep inside the garage, making two brilliant lozenges of light on the back wall. By the reflected light Kit could make out a small sedan that barely fitted into the compact garage. A faint glow was the dashboard, feeble but encouraging.

"Any luck?" Kit asked. She glanced up at the dark ridge above them for any sign of their pursuers. There were a few more stars now. The temperature was dropping, and once again it was winter, so that the sky had a brilliant luminous quality. In answer to her question, the motor roared and the car immediately lurched backward. Kit stepped out of the way, and then hopped on the running board as it went past.

THE automobile had a cold, stuffy smell, but that disappeared with movement. They reached the end of the space for turning, and Dan jammed on the brakes in preparation for going forward. The moment of silence before he slipped into low gear was broken by shouts above them. There was a dim crack and one of the headlights went out. The sound of the second shot was lost in the clash of gears, so that Kit thought the windshield was disintegrating. There was a tiny hole in the exact center, with long streamers flaring away from it in all directions to reach the frame. Kit glanced sideways, and saw no change in Dan's expression. They were both all right. To see anything in front of her, she had to peer through narrow sections of glass a few inches wide.

Neither of them said anything as the car lurched forward. The one remaining headlight picked out the flat winding road for them. Dan's foot was pressed down to the floor, and the speedometer needle climbed steadily. The maximum safe speed for the car was about fifty-five or sixty; above that it would weave in a tight curve, ready at the first lack of balance to swing out of control. At seventy, on an unknown road, it was like a cunning animal waiting for a chance to escape.

"Keep your hands away from the glass," were Dan's first words. "It's liable to go at any minute."

"Are you all right?" Kit finally managed the question that had been nagging at her ever since they'd got started. "Sure," Dan said. He rode

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"Hurry, hurry! We must be late already for the sale!"

with his head as close as possible to the open window, so that occasionally he could glance out around the shattered windshield.

A rut in the road bounced the car so that the springs almost collapsed. When the rear wheels hit it, the car swung sideways a bit, and Dan had to yank the steering wheel around to keep it on the road.

"There's no need to go so fast," Kit said, trying to keep her voice calm. "There's no way they can follow us. Besides, we don't want to outrun the police."

"Outrun the police?"

"Certainly. That woman has probably called up by this time and reported us. The police have the license-plate number."

"We'll have to keep out of their way, that's all!"

"But, Dan, it would be the best thing that could happen to us! As long as we met them before Paul's people got us."

Dan paused before he spoke. He shook his head as though he were confused.

"Now *you're* the one who hasn't realized what position we're in. Didn't you hear me say that my commission is being withheld? That I'm under investigation for subversive activities?"

"But that can be cleared up. Your record is clean."

"SUPPOSE it is—it'll take some time to establish it; and in the meantime Paul will be able to cover up."

"Then what do *you* suggest?" she asked dryly.

"I say that we ought to go back to Paul's!"

Kit turned and stared at him by the light from the dashboard. His face was still smudged from the scramble down the ridge, and the dried blood made it look as though shadows had been cast by features that didn't really exist. And beneath the grime was a puffiness due to the beating he had received earlier in the day. All in all, he looked like a very tough character, and his eyes now fitted the picture to perfection.

"Go back to Paul's? Now?"

"It's the best time. We can get there before these people even find their way back to the highway."

"What about those men I told you about—the ones I saw in the kitchen?"

There was a faint smile somewhere in his eyes. His face was too stiff to show any expression. "We'll just have to be careful, that's all."

"You're talking like an idiot! We don't even have a gun."

"We'll get one. The car is just where we left it—and your gun is in the car."

"But so is their car where they left it—right next to the one we used. They can't have gone off without leaving a guard."

He took the sedan around a blind bend in a skid before he said, "I can take care of him."

She remembered the way he had felt when he had first come to himself after the beating. For a while then she had been sure that he had collected himself. Now she realized that, although he was as sane and calculating as he ever would be, he was a changed person. He was a man at war.

"You can't go off half-cocked this way!" Kit insisted. "You'll succeed only in getting yourself killed. Tomorrow you'll see the colonel, as you've been told to do—"

"Say, what's the matter with you?" he demanded. "This morning you were the one who kept insisting on action, and I stalled. Now that I realize you were right, you're doing the stalling!"

"My point was, and still is, that you're no good dead. You've got to stay alive to accomplish anything."

"I'm still alive, and there are a few things I can still accomplish. Something's very screwy about Paul's place, and I'm going to put my finger on it—tonight!"

"Dan—please!" she said wearily. "You're not going about this in the right way. You need organization. That's the first thing you have to learn. It's impossible to work alone!"

He had no answer to that, and Kit decided not to follow it up as long as he kept silent. The best thing for Dan was to be arrested. It would at least keep him alive until he could straighten out his case. As for her—well, she was no worse off than before.

The road ran into the main highway between two tall dunes, and Dan turned right toward Amagansett and New York without any hesitation.

"From what you told me," he said, "we must have gone off the highway about a mile or so from here."

"Yes. And as long as we keep on going at a decent speed, any one left behind to guard the cars oughtn't to recognize us. We're safe."

The highway was deserted. Out this far on the island there was no traffic at all until late spring, and even then it was very light. Any one watching their approach would see a perfectly normal slightly nondescript car probably belonging to a fisherman going about his business. Only the police, seeing the number on the license plate, would bother to check up, if they had been warned.

THEY came around a dune into full sight of the ocean, and the highway was straight before them for at least a mile. In the distance the headlight picked out two parked cars pulled off the road. A man strode up and down alongside of them, trying to keep warm. The tension in Kit's throat tightened as she recognized the Packard.

"They must have taken it down from the dune," Dan remarked. "Can you see who's watching them?"

"No; it's too far."

Dan kept the speed down to thirty-five and remained in his lane as they drew closer.

"It's the Spaniard," said Kit. "He's not even looking at us."

She put her hand up to cover her face, and then switched off the dashlight so that he couldn't possibly see them. Manolo glanced briefly at the approaching car, and then turned around, stamping his feet as if to warm them. He looked up again at the car, stared curiously at the shattered windshield, and then turned his back. Kit found that she had been holding her breath.

When they were almost abreast of him, Dan jerked the wheel around sharply and aimed straight at Manolo. Kit was so surprised she couldn't say anything. The Spaniard turned around with a questioning expression, and seemed paralyzed by the headlight. He stood that way with his head turned for more than a second. Then the car hit him.

The Spaniard is out of the way, but there are other pursuers to be feared. Can Kit and Dan escape them? For the final chapter of this tense story of Nazi intrigue and terror, read next week's Liberty.

LOOK OUT FOR THE WILLIWAWS

Continued from Page 14

Many of the military air routes in Alaska cross mountain ranges, the summits rising to 10,000 feet or more. In clear weather it's easy to go over the top. But when the mist is halfway down the slopes the pilot must hunt for an open pass. Keeping just under the cloud ceiling, he flies up a narrow ascending valley, following its twists and turns, the mountains towering above him on either side. Steadily the floor of the valley rises toward him—and he can't go higher. If he's lucky he finds that at the highest point of the pass there's still an opening below the fog. Gratefully he dives through it. If not, if he sees that the mist touches the summit of the pass, he must turn—if the valley is still wide enough for him to turn in—go back, find another pass. Some pilots, with faith in their luck and sense of direction, go upstairs into the soup. They count on keeping between the mountain walls and finding the other side of the pass clear.

There's one Army transport flyer, an old-time Alaskan bush pilot, who has a technique of his own. A certain valley traversing a mountain range makes a right-angle turn when halfway through. When the pilot finds that valley closed down in fog he goes right ahead. He carries a stop watch in his hand. After so many seconds he banks the plane in a ninety-degree turn in the thick mist. So far he has always figured it right.

Fog in Alaska and the Aleutians is often accompanied by perfect icing conditions.

Once General Buckner, the commander of our troops in Alaska, was returning by air to his headquarters at Anchorage. The last leg of the journey was over the snow-capped Chugach Mountains. Their summits were blanketed that day by thick fog. But word had come from Anchorage that Elmendorf Field was clear. So it was decided to fly over the mountain range.

THE plane was making 200 miles an hour. The general sat in the radio "office" behind the pilot. They could see only the swirls of mist whipping past the windows. They were at 13,000 feet, a safe 1,000 above the peaks.

Then the pilot saw the film of ice begin to form on the front edges of the wings. At first the rubber deicers worked, cracking it off. But when ice forms very rapidly no deicers can cope with it. They stopped flapping, and the film grew thicker.

When ice changes their shape, a plane's wings no longer lift weight as they should. This plane began to lose altitude. To keep it up, the pilot pointed it at a higher and higher angle. Therefore it steadily lost speed. More ice formed, and finally it stalled, "fell out." There was a violent jolt, as if they'd dropped a few floors in an elevator.

"What's that?" asked the general sharply.

"Slight change in our aerodynamics, sir," said the pilot, trying to make his voice sound casual.

He no longer tried to keep at 13,000. He let the plane into a long glide, pointed toward Anchorage. They ought to be past the mountains in ten minutes, he figured.

The altitude meter showed 12,000—11,500—11,000. No way to tell whether they were headed at a peak or at a gap. The gray swirls ahead kept taking the form of mountain crags. . . .

The mist thinned. In a moment they were out of it, in the clear. Below they saw the runway of Elmendorf, the long, orderly streets of barracks. It was a pleasant sight.

Down at the end of the 2,000 miles are the Japs on Kiska—or were when this was written. There they have had one of the best landlocked, hill-sheltered harbors in the Aleutians. A good situation—but we've made them pay rent for it. Whenever the weather has permitted, our Fortresses and Liberators have gone in and unloaded their bombs. But again and again those bombers have reached Kiska only to circle round and round, waiting for a hole in the clouds. Often they have had to bring the bombs home to use another day.

Tough-bearded men, you'll have no trouble
With stubborn and unsightly stubble!
Use Thin Gillette Blades, made to last—
You get slick, thrifty shaves—and fast!
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Easy Way To Get Even More Shaves With Every Gillette Blade
1. WASH FACE thoroughly with hot water and soap to soften beard and eliminate accumulated grit that dulls shaving edges
2. APPLY LATHER or Brushless Shaving Cream while face is wet. If lather is used, dip your brush in water frequently
3. TWO EDGES double blade life. Marks indicated at left identify edges, enabling you to give both equal use and get extra shaves
4. CLEAN BLADE in razor by loosening handle, then rinsing in hot water and shaking. Wiping the blade is likely to damage the edges

Our planes have kept a sharp lookout for transports bringing reinforcements to the enemy. Scout planes have patrolled thousands of square miles between Kiska and the Japanese base at Paramushiro. More than one Jap transport is now underneath those gray waters.

But some have gotten through. The Japs know how to play the weather against us. Most of the storms, the low-pressure areas, make up around Kiska or Attu to the west. Then they move east along the chain of the Aleutians, blotting out sky and ocean in fog and rain. The Japs can calculate accurately the movements of the storms. Often they can slip a transport in just behind a storm front and unload it in Kiska harbor in the two or three days that it takes the weather to clear enough for our planes.

NATURALLY, in such warfare the weather man is most important. There's a forecaster at every base. Before each flight the pilots consult with him, study his charts, weigh all the chances of wind and fog and ice. Yet in the Aleutians not only is the weather tricky, unlikely to follow the rules, but the forecaster has been handicapped by lack of information. The storms brewed out to the west of him, where only the enemy could maintain observers.

To make up for that lack, a "weather plane" has been going out nearly every day from our westernmost base. It's called "the milk wagon" and is as tough an assignment as a pilot and crew could have. It must fly in all kinds of weather. It has been going over Kiska. Sometimes it has dropped a few bombs, but its real business has been to record temperature, wind, precipitation, etc. On its work has depended the success of later bombing raids.

For our ships the weather is a harder adversary than the Japanese Navy. The Aleutians have always been a nightmare to sailors. In Unimak Pass alone there have been seventeen wrecks in fifteen years. A 1,000-ton salvage ship, the Rescuer, saved $11,000,000 worth of shipping in three months—then it too piled up on the rocks in Unimak.

Perhaps the wind blows as hard off Cape Horn as it does in the Aleutians. There may be as much fog off the Grand Banks. The tides are as powerful on the Maine coast, the ocean currents as tricky at Java Head. But nowhere else in the seven seas, mariners say, do all these factors work together with such deadly effect as in the Aleutians.

You may suspect a skipper of spinning a yarn when he tells of waves seventy feet from trough to crest. But the records bear him out. Ships lifted bow and stern by two such waves, suspended over the trough between, have broken clear in two.

Nor is a snug harbor always a protection against the wind. Without [illegible] comes over the hilltops and plunges like a dive bomber. The ship in the harbor drags anchor and goes on the rocks.

These winds are quite unpredictable. Recently, in our process of inching up on the Japs at Kiska, a task force was to be sent out to occupy an island to the west. The bay where the troops must be landed had a special reputation as a treacherous bit of water. The weather forecaster, one of the best, advised several delays. At last he informed the admiral that, as far as any Aleutian weather condition could be foretold, there would almost certainly be three or four calm days.

The task force went into the bay under cover of darkness—stars overhead, no breath of wind. Yet before morning the sky was blotted out and there was a fifty-five-mile gale. Landing barges were up-ended and turned over in the pounding surf. Those waters are so cold that a man can live in them just about twenty minutes.

The deeply indented bays of the south Alaska coast cause tremendous tides. Next to the Bay of Fundy, Cook Inlet has the highest tide in the world, thirty-six feet. On certain parts of the coast high and low tide may be miles apart. Once before the war a small yacht went aground in the middle of a broad bay. It was just after high tide. The weather was good.

Everybody on board went to sleep until the next high tide should float them off. Somebody woke up at low tide—and yelled. It wasn't only that the ship was on dry land; the ocean wasn't even in sight.

When an ocean current meets an opposing wind a tide rip is formed. These are familiar sights in all oceans. Many have seen the one off Nantucket, a stationary wave usually four or five feet high which a ship hardly notices as it passes through.

The Alaskan tide rips are something else. The most famous is off Cape Hinchingbrook at the entrance to Prince William Sound. A strong current sets seaward there. When it meets a gale of sixty miles or more, there's a rip that is a wave broken up into a series of cones fifty to sixty feet high, thrown up violently from the surface, rising and falling. The ocean all around is a seething maelstrom. A small vessel could be tossed up on one of the cones and let down as if dropped off a cliff. Hinchingbrook Rip has torn more than one ship to pieces, and so has the rip at Cape St. Elias.

The icing conditions of the Aleutians that bring down so many planes can also be a hazard to ships. I saw an 8,000-ton steamer come into Kodiak, homeward-bound from Dutch Harbor, her decks and upper structure plated with six inches of ice. Half-inch ropes had become four-inch cables. She was going home with empty holds and the hundreds of tons of ice made her dangerously top-heavy. The captain delayed his sailing until it had been laboriously hacked away.

Besides the visible dangers of storm and tide, there are the perils hidden beneath the surface. The Aleutians are one of the worst charted corners of the ocean, simply because the work of charting is so hard to do effectively. In most ocean areas dangerous shoals and reefs are easy to locate by sounding. In the Aleutians you might drop the sounding lead all around a submerged mountain's sharp and slender pinnacle and never suspect that it was there. Ships may have been passing it unknowingly for years—then a ship finds it and another crew is gone to Davy Jones's locker.

And the fog lies on and around the islands three days out of four in most seasons. Our transports and freighters, destroyers and cruisers, go groping down the whole 2,000 miles through hidden dangers. It's a relief, an easing of tension, when at last they come in contact with the enemy.

EVEN on land our soldiers are still dogged by the weather. There's no shelter from it, not a tree, not even a bush.

The surface of the ground is mostly a spongy tundra. It's like walking on a very deep feather bed or in two feet of powdery snow. Soldiers acquire an abnormal gait, lifting their feet high at every step.

Here and there are pools fed by underground springs. These are partly covered by a green mushy growth that looks solid but isn't. At night or in the fog the pools could swallow a patrol without a trace.

The wind is what gets on the nerves of the troops. It blows on and on until the ears ache. The native Aleuts used to have a saying: "A wind is not a river—sometime it will stop." But they were a patient people. Sometimes it takes a week for a wind to stop.

This isn't the first war in history in which the weather has been one of the chief belligerents. Since history began, it has started and stopped invasions, raised sieges, decided the issue of battles.

But it's doubtful that the weather has ever before been so consistent and powerful an antagonist.

It stands squarely across the north road to Tokyo. But that is the short road.

THE END

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

One of Winston Churchill's most persistent critics attacked him for his conduct of the campaign in Africa. "I am a firm believer," said the critic, "in fighting the enemy with his own weapons."

Churchill took a deep puff on his cigar and said: "Tell me, how long does it take you to sting a bee?"

—Pocketbook of War Humor.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

NEW WPB ORDER MAY ENTITLE YOU TO WORLD'S FINEST ANTI-FREEZE

The War Production Board, by its recent Limitation Order, has prohibited the sale of "Prestone" anti-freeze for use in passenger cars, station wagons and taxis. The purpose of the order is to free for more essential uses the supply of ethylene glycol base anti-freeze left over by the armed forces.

Following is a partial list of uses for which the sale of "Prestone" anti-freeze is permitted: TRUCKS AND BUSSES—The freight hauler, the grocer, the farmer, the milkman, the factory operator, the moving man—anyone who operates one or more commercial trucks or busses. STATIONARY ENGINES—Equipment for dredging, farming, excavating, hoisting, mining, etc. FARM EQUIPMENT—Tractors and other farm equipment, as well as trucks.

IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE—GET YOURS NOW

War supply hazards being what they are, the prudent operator will lay in his next winter's supply of "Prestone" anti-freeze *right now, this summer.* This is the one way you can be absolutely sure of having an adequate supply when the cold weather starts.

IF YOU OWN A DELIVERY

truck or service fleet, the order makes you eligible for the all-winter protection of "Prestone" anti-freeze. Put it in and stop worrying about cold-weather breakdowns and the shortage of replacement parts.

IF YOU OWN A BUS . . .

"Prestone" anti-freeze can help you keep war workers on a war schedule. Special ingredients in "Prestone" anti-freeze protect against rust and corrosion—a further protection against parts replacement.

IF YOU OWN A TRACTOR

working either for industry or for America's vast war farming program, you can insure it against winter with "Prestone" anti-freeze. The same applies to stationary engines and all construction equipment.

IF YOU OWN A TRUCK,

you are eligible for "Prestone" anti-freeze to keep essential wheels moving. No need to idle your engine during cold-weather stops to avoid freeze-up—"Prestone" anti-freeze saves you precious gasoline!

SAME PRODUCT AS ALWAYS

ONE SHOT LASTS ALL WINTER
YOU'RE SAFE AND YOU KNOW IT!

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PROTECTS AGAINST RUST AND CORROSION!

It can't evaporate or boil away!

It creates no fire hazard!

PRESTONE ANTI-FREEZE

TRADE-MARK

Challenge your child—or the neighbor's—to this battle of wits, but don't make any bets as to which of you will win

BY

LESTER F. MILES, Ph. D.

WHO'S SMARTER—YOU OR THE KIDS?

YOU may be able to lead off in the art of living, and guide a child to proper paths in his daily affairs, but haven't you wondered why a youngster can frequently outsmart you on many occasions?

Reason: The youngsters continually exercise their mental agility through the youthful trait of curiosity, a thing we adults so frequently toss aside and many of our interests with it.

Try this battle of wits with some kid—your own, if you have one. It would make a pleasant few minutes of keen competition. Make sure you time yourself accurately, and don't forget what you'd do to the youngster if you caught him looking at the answers.

Problem 1: An average eight-year-old can read and solve this one in 1½ minutes: Harry was cleaning out his trunk. In it he found a stamp album, catcher's mitt, pair of binoculars, cigarette case, model sailboat, a golf ball, and a fountain pen. He gave his father the golf ball and cigarette case and presented his sister with the stamp album. He decided to keep only the remaining things he could take along to the Army camp, and gave the rest to his brother. What did his brother receive?

Problem 2: An average nine-year-old can read and solve this one in 1½ minutes: The man who sneezed was neither light nor short nor bearded. The only men in the group were: (*a*) Bert, who is light, short, and has a mustache; (*b*) Jack, who is tall, dark, and shaves his face cleanly; (*c*) Wilson, who is dark, short, and shaves his face cleanly. Who sneezed?

Problem 3: An average twelve-year-old can read and solve this one in 3 minutes: Three well known proverbs are presented here in a scrambled group of two words each. Write them on another piece of paper, using all the words given:

saves nine	a stitch
spring a	in the
no moss	in time
to thoughts	young man's
stone gathers	a rolling
fancy turns	of love

Problem 4: An average sixteen-year-old can read and solve this one in 45 seconds: Mr. Brown's house is one of many similar houses which line the street on which he lives. When Mr. Brown goes to work each morning, he turns to his right after he leaves his front door and walks with the sun in his face. In which direction does the house across from Mr. Brown's face?

Problem 5: The average eleven-year-old boy can read and give the answer to this one in ½ minute: Which person in the following group might be considered an outsider when compared to the rest?

Peewee Reese	Dolf Camilli
Leo Durocher	Joe DiMaggio
Jimmy Foxx	Dixie Walker
Man-Mountain Dean	Rube Melton
Hank Greenberg	

Problem 6: The average thirteen-year-old can read and answer this one in one minute: Jimmy Smith met an old friend of his mother on the street.

"Hello. It's nice to see you again," Jimmy said.

"It's nice to see you, Jimmy," his mother's friend answered. "By the way, I got married since I last saw you and want you to meet some one you've never seen. This is my son."

"How are you?" Jimmy said. "I'm glad to know you. What's your name?"

"Same as my father's," the strange boy said.

"Then your name is Harry," Jimmy answered immediately.

Jimmy was right, but how did he know?

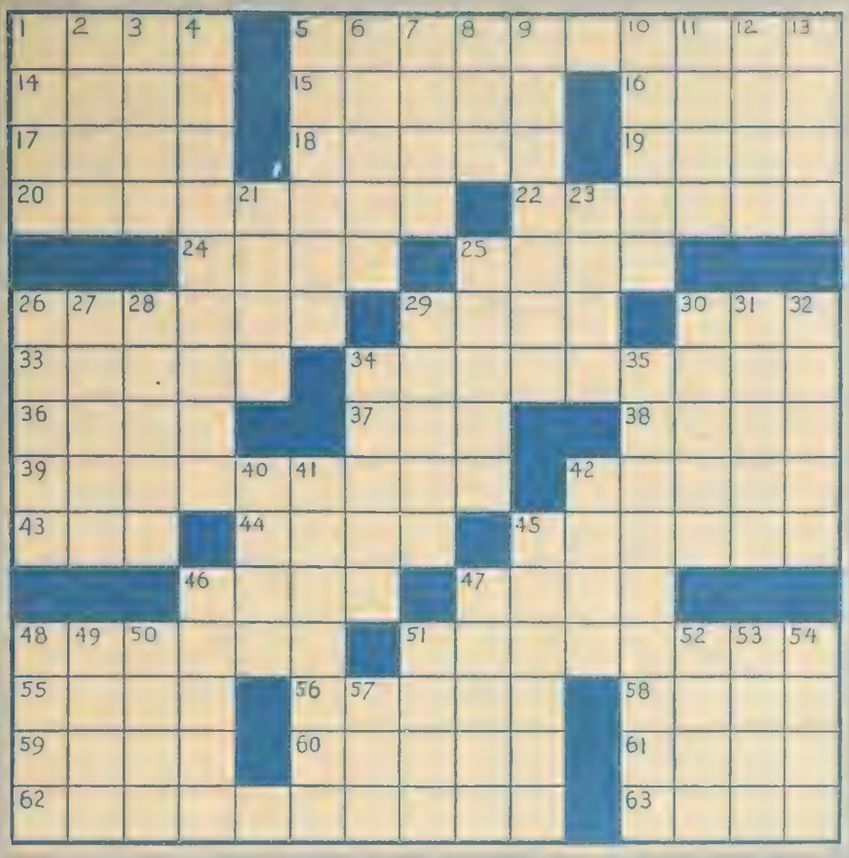
Problem 7: The average fourteen-year-old can figure this one out in forty-five seconds: Jack bought himself a shirt and a tie at a total cost of five dollars for both. If he paid three dollars more for the shirt than the tie, how much did the tie cost him?

Answers appear below printed upside down

1. The brother received the model sailboat.
2. Jack sneezed.
3. The three scrambled proverbs are: A stitch in time saves nine. A rolling stone gathers no moss. In the spring a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love.
4. The house across the street from Mr. Brown's faces south.
5. Man-Mountain Dean is the outsider because he is a wrestler. The rest are ballplayers.
6. Jimmy's mother's friend was the stranger boy's father, whose name Jimmy already knew.
7. The answer is not two dollars. Jack paid one dollar for the tie and four for the shirt in order to pay three dollars *more* for the shirt than the tie.

COCKEYED CROSSWORDS

BY TED SHANE



HORIZONTAL

1 Reversed hic
5 Dey iss der most annoying inseggts, hey, Göring?
14 Japan try swallow this; this swallow Japan
15 Kind of act without scenery
16 Ceiling manufacturers (abbr.)
17 Depend on
18 Monstrous, isn't it!
19 Man's name, as in Willard
20 Der Gremlins dot annoy Hitler
22 Chaws away at iron and nails
24 Would you call a doc the Prince of this?
25 Female frontispiece (abbr., pl.)
26 Kind of gal that's chased
29 This caused all the trouble in the domicile reared by Jack
30 Peer Gynt remembers her on Mother's Day
33 Terre of the Middle West
34 Noble examples of British she power
36 Put up or get out of the pot
37 Cry of the offended Lahr
38 Hitler's god
39 Where Mom and Pop went after ungrateful Sis married
42 Kind of facts the Axis can't stand
43 My good woman (Ozark)
44 Celtongue
45 Squirts lingual vinegar
46 It's on the cuff
47 This's phrown by phrantic pholks
48 A lot of half-dressed St. Vitus' dancers wriggling violently and throwing themselves around to music
51 He's fighting the Axis with hoe and rake, while digging in for victory
55 Mr. Levy, spouse of Rosemary Moiphy
56 Fresh air
58 A smidge
59 Dry, like a professor's whiskers
60 This is just plain nuts
61 "---- to you!" cried the no-man
62 Important figures
63 You've got this right at your fingertips

S	T	A	L	I	N		T	I	F	F	I	N			
C	H	A	I	S	E		O	N	E	I	D	A			
H	O		C	I	R	C	E		W	R	E	N			
I	R	E		S	T	E	N	O		E	A	N			
S	E	A	T		S	N	A	R	L		L	Y			
M	A	R	A	T		T	I	G	E	R					
S	U	L	F	A	N	I	L	A	M	I	D	E			
		S	T	R	E	P		N	O	V	E	L			
B	G		S	T	R	E	W		N	E	M	O			
A	I	R		S	I	D	E	S		R	E	P			
L	A	I	C		S	E	L	L	S		T	E			
S	N	O	R	E	S		L	O	A	F	E	R			
A	T	T	I	L	A		S	P	E	A	R	S			

Last week's answer

VERTICAL

1 Fir fur
2 An advantage taker
3 Git the fur hackles to rise
4 Genuine doughboy Dough Boy
5 Most moving place in the South
6 Hot spots for doughboys
7 They're topped by the WAVES and undered by the Jap Navy
8 Quick Riches Soothe (abbr.)
9 Completely the mostest absolutest
10 Nipoleons
11 Unclosed the entrance, à la Byron
12 A jug, a vacation, and nothing to do but read Dick Tracy!
13 Some swishy similar letters from sissies
21 Late in cockney
23 Deglamorized Cinderella nags
25 Chesty thing about a cop
26 Cow pants
27 A stolen base in the Far Eastern League
28 Because of gas, they've practically burped to a standstill
29 Ye medieval landielordie's jernt
30 Name of a gold-plated product of Tin Pan Alley (pl.)
31 Atrophied part of the yellow man's anatomy
32 They serfed 'em right in ancient Britain
34 Definitely inferior
35 They never blow their horns but produce more milk than any Jerseyite and that's no bull!
40 Where I'd rather get my pie in the sky
41 Above their fellow men they tower, while baloney blasts and promises they shower
42 Only entry I like on hills
45 Rags and tags
46 What Rommel was, and Japan won't soon have
47 Giant jitter
48 Musical fish
49 Help
50 Da mon' d'Italia
51 Here's a desert I'd do this to
52 What happened at midday, April 14, 1776
53 She makes a sissy out of Henry
54 Even though a tool, it squawks when it gets the berry
57 Zis is one of zose words

The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

Angler predicts excellent post-war fishing

FISHERMEN take note! With so many devotees of Izaak Walton otherwise occupied in making the world *un*safe for the Axis, millions of game fish are finding their home waters safest in years. Piscatorial populations are expected to soar by the end of the war. When the Big Job is done, *you'll* want to hook into some of the finny "war babies" that will be itching for a hard white-water battle. Buy plenty of War Bonds and Stamps today. First, you'll help to make sure that Victory's "in the bag." Second, you'll put aside money to pay for a trip to the Big Woods and bag your full share of the big catch that's waiting for you. This advertisement contributed by the makers of Sani-Flush and Mel'o.

YOU CAN'T BEAT
this to relieve TORTURE of
ATHLETE'S FOOT

As So Many Druggists Say!

If you suffer from itching, burning soreness from cracked, scaly skin between toes—just feel how *promptly* the first applications of medicated *liquid* Zemo relieve distress. Thus Zemo gives the irritated skin a chance to heal *faster*. Zemo is one product that *really* works.

Use Zemo freely—soon your discomfort should disappear. Zemo is a Doctor's formula backed by 35 years' success. Over 25,000,000 packages sold. It *must* be good. The first trial convinces.

NOTE: *Zemo is Also Grand For Tired, Sore Burning Feet*

ZEMO

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

Mitchell tells Crisp that his plans for a super-fast monoplane have been turned down by the board.

On a holiday trip to Germany, Mitchell and Crisp hear the first hints of Hitler's plans for a Luftwaffe.

[illegible] ill from overwork, Mitchell learns that his Spitfire has been accepted by the Royal Air Force.

BY HARRIET GOULD

SPITFIRE

(RKO)

Produced and directed by Leslie Howard

Leslie Howard, David Niven

SPITFIRE is the story of an idea, conceived before the world was ready for it, but fought for until its worth was recognized. It is the story of the miracle fighter plane that was first dreamed of by R. J. Mitchell in 1922, but which didn't really come into its own until it stood its test so well in the Battle of Britain.

In the narrative style typical of many English films, the story progresses slowly and carefully, tracing not only the evolution of the Spitfire, but the development of aviation as a whole during that period.

R. A. F. Wing Commander Geoffrey Crisp (David Niven) tells the story, which begins in 1925 when he was an unemployed test pilot. He offers his services to Mitchell (Leslie Howard), one of England's foremost plane designers, who is delighted to find somebody who believes in his radical dream of a streamlined one-piece monoplane. They work on it together, have one built, test it, race it, improve it—but they can never convince aviation officials that it is more than an interesting experiment.

When, in 1937, they take a pleasure trip to Germany and discover that the popular glider-plane clubs are a cover for the growing Luftwaffe, Mitchell rushes home to build the best fighting plane he can for his country—the Spitfire. When the government does not accept his plans he gets private backing, builds his plane, and convinces the R. A. F. of its worth.

He dies from overwork, but not before he sees his dream plane become one of England's best defenses.

Spitfire is the last Leslie Howard production to be released. It comes fast on the heels of the tragic announcement of his disappearance some place over the Atlantic while returning from Lisbon. He had gone to deliver a series of lectures on co-operation with the British government and to attend the première of Spitfire in that city.

In addition to his film work, Leslie Howard, who had been suffering with a heart ailment, was working as a BBC news commentator and as a propagandist for the government (a job he was well fitted for, since he spoke, fluently, Italian, French, German, and Portuguese).

The movie world has lost a talented contributor with the death of Mr. Howard. Spitfire is a fitting final tribute to his sensitive skill as a director as well as an actor.

HIT THE ICE

(Universal)
Abbott and Costello

HERE is eighty-two minutes of sheer nonsense that is bound to please the most critical A. & C. fan (who are legion, if box-office figures are any indication). This time the boys are street photographers and their talk of "shooting" fools a bank robber into inviting them along on his next job. He figures they will come in handy if there is any trouble, and there is—because they take pictures of the entire event. There are the usual Abbott-Costello shenanigans—including a mad chase on skis and a Costello-on-ice-skates sequence. Johnny Long's orchestra and Ginny Simms have spots in the picture, but, as nobody needs to be told at this late date, Hit the Ice is directed primarily at lovers of low comedy.

LIEUTENANT SMITH

(Pathé-RKO)
Bill Terry

WHAT qualifies a man for an Officers' Candidate School; what happens to him when he gets to one like Fort Benning, Georgia; what tests of character, mind, and body he must pass before he becomes a shavetail (second lieutenant to you) are all depicted carefully—but lightly—in Lieutenant Smith. This twenty-minute short is the eighth in the This Is America group. It is the logical sequel to Private Smith, U. S. A., the first in the series, which also featured Bill Terry (star of Stage Door Canteen) in the title role. Unfortunately, it follows a little too soon after the release of OWI's Wings Up, which covered the same problem—and had a running commentary by Captain Clark Gable. But Lieutenant Smith is an interesting study of one phase of Army life.

Published Here Every Month

This is **"FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS"** month in New York! Seldom has show-wise Gotham been in such a dither as it is over the screen world premiere of the great Hemingway novel.

• • •

This Paramount super-picture is of such proportions that its first showings will be limited to two-a-day, reserved seat engagements. Watch for the dates of these openings in other cities soon!

• • •

Claudette Colbert, Paulette Goddard and Veronica Lake all in one picture is not just something to dream about. Paramount has made it something to cheer about in **"SO PROUDLY WE HAIL."**

• • •

This is the screen's first stirring love story of our women who have gone to war—a powerful drama of heroic U. S. nurses on Bataan and Corregidor.

• • •

Based on records of the Army Nursing Corps, and on interviews with the eight real-life nurses who actually escaped the Bataan holocaust, "So Proudly We Hail" is uniquely notable for its authenticity, tense adventure and superb romance.

• • •

Besides its three lovely stars, George Reeves, Walter Abel, Barbara Britton and Sonny Tufts contribute other notable performances to this brilliant Mark Sandrich production.

• • •

In film business we call a fine emotional drama "a great woman's picture." We believe that "So Proudly We Hail" will stand for a long time as *the* great "woman's picture" of the post-Pearl Harbor world.

• • •

★ SERVICE 'STARS' ★

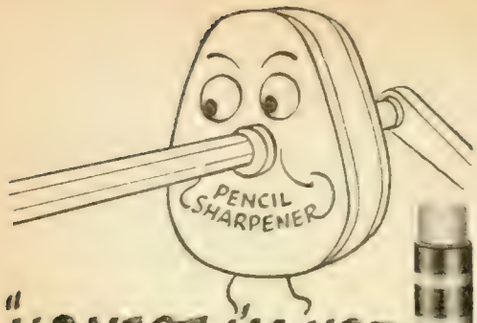
. . . Macdonald Carey's a 2nd Lieut. in the Marines. He's at Parris Island . . . George Reeves will soon be a Paratrooper . . . Stirling Hayden's a 2nd Lieut. at the San Diego Marine Base.

The South, appropriately enough, has just had the honor of holding the first premieres of **"DIXIE"** *and the receptions were terrific. Soon all the rest of us will be seeing Bing Crosby and lovely Dorothy Lamour in this grand Technicolor musical.*

• • •

And in a sunny corner of the Paramount lot they're putting the final touches on the first print of **"LET'S FACE IT,"** in which Bob Hope and Betty Hutton convert a famous stage hit into one of the most hilarious of all

Paramount Pictures



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PICTURES WORTH SEEING

FILM	GIST	LIBERTY SAID:
ABOVE SUSPICION (M-G-M) Joan Crawford, Fred MacMurray, Conrad Veidt, Basil Rathbone	*Spy thriller* (a honeymoon couple search Germany for a missing British agent).	Clues far-fetched . . . but story is excitingly developed . . . better than average spy stuff. (6-19-43)
ACTION IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC (Warners) Raymond Massey, Humphrey Bogart	*Drama* (the story of the valiant work of the merchant marine in this war).	Thrilling story of the men who sail the ships—deliver the goods . . . suspenseful . . . authentic . . . outstanding performances. (7-3-43)
BATAAN (M-G-M) Robert Taylor, Thomas Mitchell, Robert Walker	*Drama* (a group of thirteen "expendables" cover the retreat of our Army during the last days on Bataan).	Pulls no punches . . . starkly grim . . . exciting, dramatic . . . superb cast . . . don't miss this one. (7-10-43)
CABIN IN THE SKY (M-G-M) Ethel Waters, Lena Horne, "Rochester" Anderson	*All-Negro musical* (a fantasy concerning the struggle of good and evil forces for the soul of Little Joe Jackson).	Lighthearted fantasy . . . slow in spots, but has much to offer . . . lovely music and Ethel Waters' singing make picture worth seeing. (4-3-43)
LADY OF BURLESQUE (United Artists) Barbara Stanwyck, Michael O'Shea	*Comedy-mystery* (comics, cold cream, and killers backstage at a burlesque).	A peep-show into the lives of burlesque folk . . . a bad whodunit but good entertainment . . . authentic. (6-12-43)
MISSION TO MOSCOW (Warners) Walter Huston, Ann Harding, Oscar Homolka	*Drama* (living history. Ambassador to Russia Davies' report on the Soviet Union).	Intellectual achievement . . . vital, gripping, dramatic . . . cast superb . . . a tribute to our ally. (6-19-43)
MR. LUCKY (RKO) Cary Grant, Laraine Day	*Comedy melodrama* (a gangster picks the perfect set-up, but a smart society girl sets him straight).	A lively mixture of comedy and melodrama . . . neat and novel twist makes for a surprise ending. (6-5-43)
MY FRIEND FLICKA (20th-Fox) Roddy McDowall, Preston Foster, Rita Johnson	*Drama* (the tender story of a ranch kid's devotion to his pony).	Frankly escapist movie . . . beautiful Technicolor photography . . . heart-warming, unsophisticated. (5-15-43)
NEXT OF KIN (Universal release)	*Drama* (a grim well told story of the dangers of loose talk in wartime).	Originally planned as British training film . . . packs an enormous wallop. (5-22-43)
PRELUDE TO WAR (OWI)	*Documentary* (part of the orientation course given the Army . . . the incidents of Axis aggression that led to war).	Provides a solid base for intelligent understanding of this war . . . vital, provoking . . . a must. (6-12-43)
REAP THE WILD WIND (Paramount) Paulette Goddard, Ray Milland, and John Wayne	*Melodrama* (the romances of the seagoing daughter of a salvage skipper in the days of sailing ships and pirates).	A De Mille super-spectacle full of excitement, color, and comedy . . . a fabulous historical show rather than co-ordinated artistic achievement. (4-11-42)
STAGE DOOR CANTEEN (United Artists) All-star cast	*Revue* (romance at the Canteen plus a good sample of the entertainment given our servicemen there. Sixty-eight stars, six bands).	A glowing and exciting tribute to America's theater folk . . . jam-packed with entertainment . . . a little long, but solid entertainment. (6-26-43)
THE HUMAN COMEDY (M-G-M) Mickey Rooney, Fay Bainter, Frank Morgan	*Homey drama* (three days in the life of the Macauleys of Ithaca as seen by Saroyan).	Delightful and heart-warming film . . . no real plot, but each scene a gem . . . direction excellent. (4-24-43)
THE MORE THE MERRIER (Columbia) Jean Arthur, Charles Coburn, Joel McCrea	*Comedy* (jam-packed wartime Washington takes a good-natured ribbing).	One of the funniest pictures of the season . . . smartly paced plot . . . swell cast. (5-29-43)
THE OX-BOW INCIDENT (20th-Fox) Henry Fonda, Dana Andrews, Frank Conroy	*Drama* (mob hysteria in a Western town results in the lynching of three men).	An exciting, intelligent, relentless movie . . . tight direction . . . finely drawn characters . . . superb direction. (5-1-43)
THIS LAND IS MINE (RKO) Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara, Walter Slezak	*Drama* (a timid teacher in a Nazi-occupied country is forced into a real understanding of the war).	Fearless and pointed denunciation of collaborationists . . . Laughton's performance memorable. (5-22-43)

HOW'S IT GOING, YANK?

Continued from Page 33

The weather gets better, and the training flights are on, and you have a yen to be an aerial gunner, but instead your job is loading bombs. So you practice that and practice it, in wet weather and dry, in mud and in dust, and the days grow shorter. And one night when you have a date in the village five miles away with a cute WAAF named Phyllis you find you can't keep it. The station is alerted. Tomorrow is the day.

That night you work harder than you ever did before. It's not practice this time. The mission may be "scrubbed," but again it may not. So you break your back cranking the windlass that hoists the bombs from the dollies into the yawning bomb bays of the Forts, and you stick your piece of gum on a 2,000-pounder as a personal message to Herr Shicklgruber & Co.

The Forts go out and they do a job, and most of 'em come back, and the crews are heroes, with newspapermen to take their pictures and generals to pin medals on 'em. Which is as it should be. And you go on loading bombs. Night after night, and the nights are getting cold now. Sometimes your hands are freezing and you have a lousy cold and the dolly breaks down in the mud, and the lieutenant hasn't had any sleep either, so he gives you particular hell. And then the mission is scrubbed, so you unload the bombs. The next night you do it all over again, and this time the Forts take off, but there is ten tenths clouds over the target, so your calling cards aren't cropped this time either.

The winter months are long, and mail from home is delayed. The British are fine people, but you wish to heaven you were back in Kansas. You know that it all adds up to winning the war, that somebody has to stay on the ground and do the dirty work, but—

One night, particularly fed up—or browned off, as the R. A. F. prefers to call it—you get a ride into town, hoping to see a movie, hoping to forget for a little while. But the movie turns out to be one that you saw in Topeka in 1940, under another name; not a very good movie, either—not good enough to see again. So you go moodily into a pub and ask for a pint of bitters.

The blackout curtains are drawn and it's warm and bright in the pub, and a three-cornered game of darts is going on between the owner of the pub—a big cheerful individual—and a little gray-haired civilian and a sergeant in the horizon blue of the R. A. F. And the civilian says, "Come on, Yank; make a fourth here!"

Somewhat reluctantly you do, protesting that you are no darts player. But you win the first game, thanks mainly to the uncanny skill of your partner, and you have another beer, and gradually the chill begins to vanish in the warmth of conversation and friendly rivalry. So that when the R. A. F. sergeant says casually, "That was a good show you chaps put on over at St. Nazaire last week," you feel for the first time a surge of real pride in your own outfit. And when the owner of the pub asks you how living conditions are out in the field, you'd bite your tongue off rather than complain.

SO before you knew it the evening was gone. It was a historic evening, in a way, because as you were leaving the little gray-haired civilian said, "Why not come round for supper next time you have a night off? My wife'd like to meet you; she has a sister in the States somewhere. We might even be able to offer you an egg."

You didn't think you would, but two weeks later you took him up on his invitation. There *was* an egg for you, too—a real one, in a shell. Your first egg in months. But the egg wasn't so important as the strangely restful feeling of being in a home again. A real home, where the family was remarkably like your own: ordinary people with more than ordinary kindness.

From that evening forward, England was not quite as foreign a country as it had been. Time passed, and the missions became more numerous. Lille and Lorient and St. Nazaire. Abbeville and Rouen and Rennes. Until at last American bombs fall on Germany: on Wilhelmshaven, on Vegesack, on Hamm.

Dear Mom:

There's not much news except that the days are getting longer now, and our group is beginning to click. I can't tell you about it, but I think we've got the best group in the wing. Your Christmas package got to me in time for Valentine's Day. The cookies were broken but still darn good. Another English family asked me to dinner last Sunday.

An early spring in England this year, and with the spring comes a new feeling of power and confidence. The Eighth Air Force is done with waiting. It has proved, in the long dreary winter months, what its adherents always claimed: that its bombers, unescorted, can spread ruin by day in Germany, just as the R. A. F. sows terror by night. All it needed was sufficient numbers; now it is beginning to get them.

So the tall sergeant, scowling reflectively at the sidewalk, turns your question over in his mind. And finally he finds an answer.

"How's it going?" he repeats slowly. "Well, it was kinda strange at first." He looks up with an odd sort of triumph in his eyes. "But I'm used to it now. We're gonna give the Germans hell this summer! You stick around and see."

O. K., sergeant. We'll stick around. We'll see.

THE END

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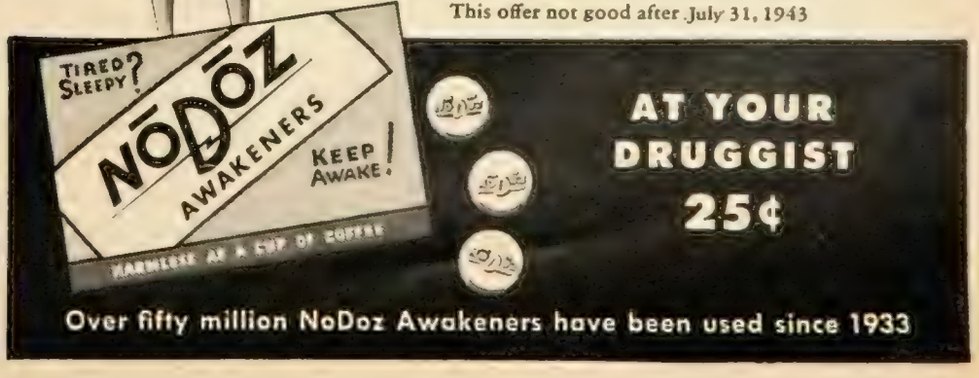

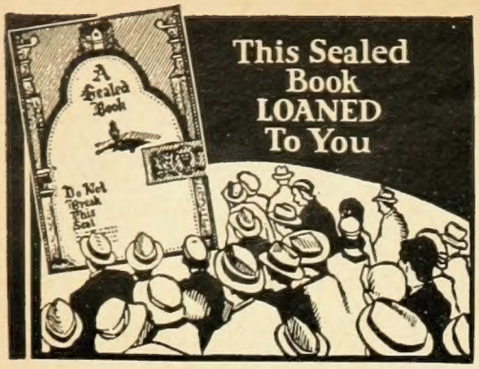

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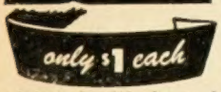

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THIS MAN'S WAR

CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

I IMAGINE I'd be a rich man if I were given a cut on all the bets I settle on this page. You should see the heap of letters that begin, "I've got a bet on, Sarge, and I would like you to settle it," etc.

Well, I don't mind settling bets as long as the questions are good sensible ones. It all adds up to giving some soldiers and sailors a better understanding of the armed forces of the United States. And that's important. So on with the bets, so long as nobody asks me to hold the money.

Here's one from Camp Adair, Oregon. A private first class writes, "I have a bet I would like you to settle. I said there was such a thing as a five-star general in the U. S. Army. I said General Pershing was a five-star general, and also Generals Grant and Sherman. Do I win, Sarge?"

Woman Doctor

No, you lose. Sorry, but don't blame me. I don't make the rules. The fact is, we do not have and never did have a five-star general. Four stars is the top of the ladder.

"Black Jack" Pershing, a four-star general, retired in 1924 with the special title conferred by Congress of "General of the Armies of the United States." This is a special honorary title and no one else can hold it while Pershing is alive. But it doesn't entitle him to five stars!

Grant and Sherman were four-star generals, too. They and Sheridan were the only soldiers in American history to hold the title of General of the Armies before Pershing. But still—only four stars!

By the way (and maybe you can *win* a bet on this one), George Washington was not a four-star general of the United States Army. He was a lieutenant general—three stars. From 1775 to 1783 Washington was General and Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, and in 1798 he was appointed Lieutenant General and Commander in Chief of the United States Army. The rank of four-star general was not created until 1799, and the first man to hold it was Ulysses S. Grant in 1866.

OLD SARGE.

* * *

Should an officer tip his hat to a lady? And on which side does he walk when walking with a female officer? I find great difference of opinion on these questions.

Lieut. J. D., Fort Jackson, S. C.

Military courtesy, like ordinary good manners, leaves room for common sense and gentlemanly consideration. To be strictly formal, an officer does not tip his hat to a lady. He salutes her. But I know plenty of officers who always tip their hats to ladies and intend to continue doing so. They feel it conveys more respect than the salute. And I don't think they'll be court-martialed for it!

As for which side to walk on, ordinarily rank is always to the right. That is, if a major and a lieutenant are walking down the street, the major should be to the right. But if the lieutenant happens to be a female, say a nurse, it is perfectly proper to put ordinary courtesy ahead of military. In other words, the major walks on the outside of the sidewalk, even though that might put him on the left of the nurse lieutenant.

* * *

If the Army is going to have women doctors, is it right that they should examine men? I'm against it. What do you think, Sarge?

Cpl. J. O. M., Fort Dix, N. J.

And you had to pick on Old Sarge to answer that question! Well, I'm going to make the answer short and snappy. In civilian life, men doctors examine women, don't they? I guess if the women can take it, the men ought to be able to.

* * *

I had a little trouble with an M. P. I happen to have a regulation Army belt and pair of trousers and a few other items which I bought in the last few years. This M. P. stopped me and told me I wasn't entitled to wear them.

Is he right, or is he just stretching his authority?

N. C., Miami, Fla.

The M. P. is absolutely right. AR 600-90 forbids the wearing by unauthorized persons of any part of the Army uniform.

* * *

Dear Sarge: Positively this is the first time I ever addressed any sergeant as "dear." However, since it's

information I want, I hope I'll be forgiven.

I was in the last war, but am too old for the armed forces now, just over fifty-three. At one time I was a first-grade wireless operator, and am at present taking instruction to get my license renewed.

Is there any chance of my getting into the fight? If so, how would I go about it? Also, is there any chance of getting into the Army Transport Service?

R. G. W., New Orleans, La.

Thanks for the "Dear"—and I'm perfectly willing to assume you didn't mean it. I

Four-star bet

was called lots of things in the last big show, but I'm sure that wasn't one of 'em.

Well, I guess the thing for you to do is try to enlist. You're too old for the draft, but the Army provides for enlistment of men over thirty-eight with previous military experience. If you can make the medical requirements you've got a good chance. Wireless men are needed. The U. S. Civil Service Commission supplies wireless operators to the Army Transport Service. If you can't make the grade by enlistment, you might try for a civilian wireless operator's job through the Civil Service.

Best of luck!

* * *

We officers' wives have a special service called The Locators which keeps on file all the names and duration addresses of officers' families. Requests for information should be sent to The Locators, P O. Box 537, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

I don't think enough people know about this, and it might do much good if you could mention it in your department of Liberty.

Mrs. H. E. P., Coconut Grove, Fla.

The Locators are doing a grand job of work. I only wish it were possible for the enlisted men to have a similar service, so family friendships made in the Army could be preserved.

Too many Army transports get lost in the shuffle.

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42d St., New York.

HOW LONG BEFORE VICTORY?

Continued from Page 21

itary actions of a new type. This chapter of European offensive strategy will at the same time constitute the closing chapter. Concentric thrusts will be delivered against Germany from various directions. All of Europe will become one huge unified theater of war. Combined Anglo-American-Soviet operations will tie down German reserves everywhere. The Wehrmacht will be subjected to strongest pressure from several sides.

Somewhere the German front will crack under this pressure, possibly in several places. Germany's mobile reserves will be insufficient to stop the gaps and the Allied forces will penetrate through them. It does not matter where the German defenses collapse on the European continent. If they collapse in one sector the Allies cannot be stopped, because the German reserves will be tied down at other fronts and front sectors. When the German front in the west collapses, the German defenses in the east will be untenable. When the German front in the east falls, defense on the German front in the west will become senseless.

For then the realities of the several-front war against Germany will make themselves felt. Twenty-seven years ago the then chief of the German general staff, General Falkenhayn, described Germany's situation in a multi-front war in a letter to Kaiser Wilhelm II as follows:

Under the fierce pressure being exerted against us, we have no free reserve of forces. Every shift of troops in one direction inevitably causes a dangerous weakening in another direction which may lead to our collapse. It is an empty illusion to think that we can distribute our forces according to a certain ratio between east and west, or between individual front sectors. Only by unceasing tricks, making use even of the smallest units, can the High Command still maintain the perilous equilibrium.

AS soon as the joint Anglo-American-Soviet offensive starts, the timetable of the war will be accelerated. It need not be broken off as the winter broke off the German offensives in Russia. The Wehrmacht cannot attack in Russia during the winter, but the Red Army can. Nor can one measure the duration of the coming operations in the west and in the south by the duration of the Tunisian campaign. By far the greater part of that campaign was taken up not by fighting but by building a base of operations from Casablanca to Benghazi. In the late fall of 1942 not a single Anglo-American soldier was stationed in North Africa, except in Egypt. The actual military operations in Tunisia were terminated within six weeks.

I repeat: Power means speed.

THE END

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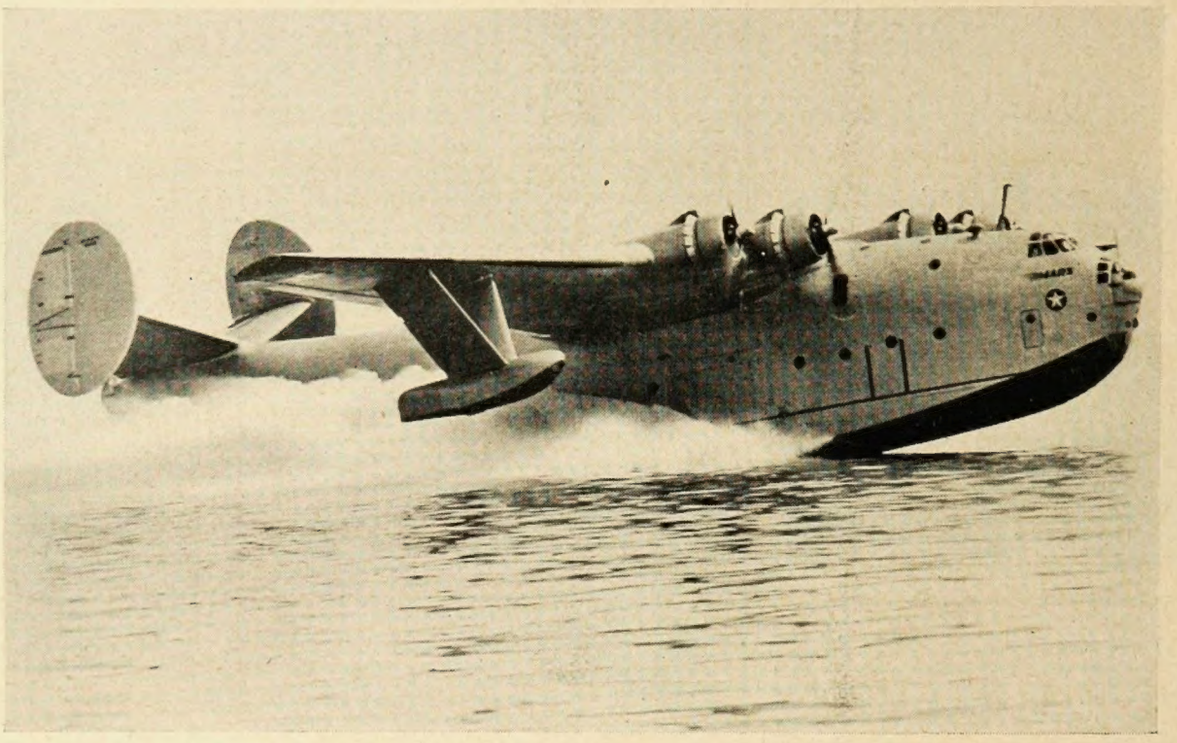

Flying hotels like the above will serve air-minded America.

TOO many Americans, young as well as old, the airplane is still something at which to gape. It's spectacular, it's exciting, it puts on a great show—but when it comes to thinking of it as something they themselves can use, they shy away. Millions of the boys in our armed forces will return to civilian life with a completely matter-of-fact attitude toward the airplane. They will find it hard to understand why we Johnny-Stay-at-Homes still regard it as something for the other fellow to use—but not us.

The last war brought the automobile out of the curiosity class and into a position where most Americans today feel lost if they haven't got one. This war will make the airplane a "tool" of general use.

Heretofore planes have been expensive—costly to buy and to operate. Facilities for their use have been limited. But the war has brought about a tremendous expansion of airport facilities. How many new fields have been built is a military secret, but we can be certain the war will leave us with a vastly expanded network of airways and service facilities. This holds true throughout the world. Our Army and Navy transport services are flying over every sea and every continent and we can safely guess an airport has been constructed about every 500 miles along the many routes they cover.

Prior to the war the metals and materials that go into airplane manufacture were produced in limited quantities by expensive methods. Peace will find us extremely wealthy in these materials. For the first time vast quantities of light metals will be available for civilian use.

All that is needed to make us a great flying nation is a proper understanding in the public mind of the air and its significance in our lives.

We've got to stop thinking of the air as an unnatural realm for man and of the airplane as a mysterious and awesome vehicle. We must learn to regard the airplane as a tool—as the best and finest device to take us from place to place—just as we think of a hammer as a device to drive nails with, and a saw as an implement for cutting wood.

True, there's danger in the air, but where isn't there danger? People still give themselves blood poisoning by careless use of hammers and saws. They still kill themselves by the tens of thousands in automobiles. Used properly and with common sense, the airplane is a safe vehicle. In the air there are few hazards, and with the new devices for safety born of the war, the average human being is safer off the ground than on it.

Paul Hunter

Long Before Pearl Harbor

they were aging in oak

YEARS before there were any gasoline ration books, these great whiskies were laid away to age under the most favorable auspices imaginable. Fifty years ago, you see, the Congress of the United States passed a very fortunate law for the man who really likes fine whiskies. This Bottled-in-Bond Act specifies strict regulations governing bottled in bond whiskies.

As a result, none of the emergency changes forced upon most other products by war-time needs have touched these great whiskies. So whenever you buy *these* famous old bottled in bond products you get the same quality as ever. It is no special privilege or favor but simply a matter of long-standing law.

On one detail, however, we must ask your indulgence. Since the distilleries of this company are engaged in the production of alcohol for war purposes, today's supply of these great whiskies must be taken from reserve stocks which are necessarily limited.

So if for this or any other reason, there are times when you can't find your favorite whiskey at your dealer's, please be patient. Remember that every effort is being made to distribute these whiskies fairly and insure that a continuous, even if reduced, supply will always be available.

OLD GRAND-DAD
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

OLD TAYLOR
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

OLD CROW
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT WHISKEY—RYE OR BOURBON

MOUNT VERNON
BRAND
MARYLAND STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY

OLD OVERHOLT
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